



ANC TODAY

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Conversations with the **President**



Creating work and opportunities for young people

■ By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

THIS week we observed Youth Day in tribute to the generations of young people who continue to inspire our ongoing pursuit for social justice, equality and opportunity for all.

If we are to live up to the democratic promise for which so many sacrificed and gave their lives, we have to ensure that we invest in today's generation of young people and unleash their potential.

Like many parts of the world, our country is grappling with high youth unemployment. To overcome this challenge we need an approach that includes investing in education

and skills development, fostering youth entrepreneurship and implementing targeted employment programmes focusing on young people.

As part of this work, Government established the Presidential Employment Stimulus and the Presidential Youth Employment Intervention. These initiatives are providing opportunities to hundreds of thousands of young people at a time when not enough jobs are being created to absorb new entrants into the labour market.

Since it began in 2020, the Presidential Employment Stimulus has provided more than two million jobs and livelihood

opportunities. Of the participants in the programme to date, 72% are young people and 66% are women.

A vital part of our efforts to empower young people is the SAYouth.mobi platform, which is a single point for unemployed young South Africans to access opportunities for work, training and learning.

There are now over 4.7 million young people registered on the SAYouth platform and the Department of Employment and Labour's employment services database. Through these platforms, young people have been supported to access over 1.6 million earning opportunities.

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Last week in the City of Tshwane, I met with a number of young people who told me excitedly they had been approached by potential employers who had seen their profiles on SA Youth.mobi.

I want to encourage young job-seekers to utilise this trusted recruitment platform – at <https://sayouth.mobi/>

Registration is free and the app is zero rated, meaning you can access the site and its contents without incurring any data charges.

We have focused on providing workplace experience and on the job training. Young people have often expressed frustration around the onerous experience requirements from employers that effectively serve as a barrier to entry for them.

In 2019, we abolished the work experience requirement for entry level jobs in the public sector. Through the Youth Employment Service, a collaboration with the private sector, tens of thousands of young people have been placed in workplace experience opportunities in a range of economic sectors.

The extent and scale of the youth unemployment crisis means that we should not focus solely on placing more young people in formal, existing jobs, but that we must bolster skills development and foster an entrepreneurial culture.

It is critical that we overcome the mismatch between the

skills available in the workforce and market need.

This is why we are investing in vocational training. We have increased funding to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges and subsidies for the operationalisation of new campuses. Each year, we are placing thousands of learners and graduates into workplace experience opportunities.

Entrepreneurship is a key economic growth driver, but rates of entrepreneurial activity in South Africa are relatively low compared to other countries. We are working to foster an enabling environment that allows more young people to become self-employed.

The Presidential Youth Employment Intervention has been working with the National Youth Development Agency and the Department of Small Business Development to financial and non-financial support to young

people for their businesses.

Through all of these initiatives, the state has supported millions of young South Africans with work opportunities, work experience and skills development. However, we can only vastly scale up the employment of young people with greater private sector involvement.

I call on business and other public sector entities to use SAYouth.mobi to provide more pathways for young people to earning and learning. The private sector needs to use all available mechanisms, including the Employee Tax Incentive, to hire young people.

South Africa's young people deserve to lead lives of dignity. Unemployment is robbing far too many youth of this right. As government and business, let us continue to work together and do all within our means to empower young people to find jobs and create their own opportunities. ■



COSATU STATEMENT ON THE DIVISION OF REVENUE BILL IN PARLIAMENT – BUDGET 2025

COSATU presented its submission on the 2025/6 Budget's Division of Revenue (allocations to provincial and local government) and Public Sector Pensions and Related Payments Bills to Parliament's Standing Committee: Appropriations.

The Federation welcomes the positive increase in funding for critical and economic infrastructure, with an additional R33 billion bringing total infrastructure investments over the next three years to a total of R1.03 trillion. This includes roads (R402bn), water (R156bn), plus investments in rail, ports, and 4 new hospitals in Limpopo and the Western Cape and 13 000 university beds. The R12.7 billion investments in Metro Rail will be a boost to 10 million workers across the metros, providing them more affordable and faster transport to get to work.

Key to ensuring the successful roll-out of the infrastructure programme is for law enforcement organs to ramp up the fight against corruption, the construction mafia and cable theft syndicates, as well as vandalism. Similarly, Parliament will need to hold a tight leash over provincial and local government to make sure targets as well as BBBEE and local procurement commitments are met at all times.

The Federation appreciates the additional funding to help rebuild frontline public services crippled by years of reckless neo-liberal austerity budget cuts, including R29 billion for ed-



ucation and R28.9 billion for health as well filling key frontline vacancies including 800 doctors, 4 000 police officers, nurses and teachers, plus rolling out of Grade R to 700 000 learners as per the Basic Education Laws Amendment Act. The over R2.1 billion allocated towards laying the foundations for the National Health Insurance is a welcome sign amidst the onslaught of attacks on government's efforts to rollout universal access to public healthcare.

However, though these are positive initial steps in the right direction, they are far from enough to undo years of brutal budget cuts that have crippled public services. The additional posts whilst welcome, are far too little to reverse the drastic decline in the ratios of teachers to learners, nurses and doctors to patients, police officers to communities amongst others.

Whilst COSATU supports allocations to local government, including R2.3 billion to roll out prepaid elec-

tricity meters, we are deeply concerned by the rapidly deteriorating state of many municipalities and basic services, including 16 struggling to pay staff in the North West, Free State, Mpumalanga, Northern and Eastern Cape Provinces and more failing to pay pension funds their due amounts. Interventions to stabilise and rebuild local government, including a new funding model and a shift towards the District Development Model must be accelerated. We cannot afford the further collapse of many municipalities and basic services.

COSATU commends government for moving away previous inexplicable cuts to the Presidential Employment Programme which has provided invaluable experience to the unemployed with an R8.8 billion boost, including R3.7 billion for the Teaching Assistants, plus R22bn from the UIF for job creation. Whilst these are not enough for the 12 million unemployed, they are a welcome step forward. ■

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LET'S NOT SPIN EMPLOYMENT STATS

■ By **MALUSI GIGABA**

THERE'S a dangerous trend creeping into our national discourse – one that replaces evidence with opinion, and hard truths with comforting fictions. The call by the Capitec CEO for the downward revision of employment statistics from 32.9% as recorded and reported by Stats SA to 10% as fictionalised by him is not just wrong, it's reckless. When leadership chooses denial over data, it's not just the truth that suffers. It's the people. South Africa doesn't need spin, it needs seriousness and candid reflection.

THE DANGER OF CONVENIENT FICTION

Let's be upfront. Stats SA does not issue numbers off vibes or opinion polls. The Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) follows rigorous international standards, aligned with the International Labour Organization (ILO). It follows a scientific methodology, and thus meets the requirements of rigour, validity and reliability. This data informs our budget decisions, central bank policies, and economic planning.

Undermining that integrity to make headlines or offer comfort does deep harm to a country that cannot afford misdirection. If there are issues with methodology, they should be discussed with Stats SA itself – constructively,

transparently, and with evidence. But public platforms should not be used to delegitimise vital institutions supporting our democracy and the very data that holds our democracy accountable.

WHAT 32.9% REALLY LOOKS LIKE

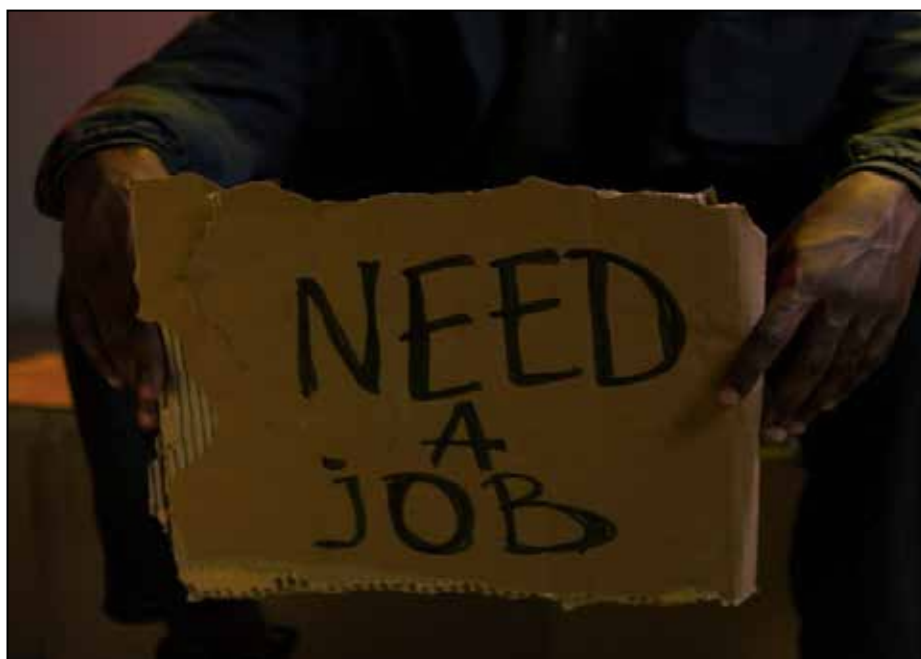
It's easy to sit in an air-conditioned boardroom and debate numbers. But statistics aren't just figures – they're people. Go to any township on a weekday at 10am, and observe the throngs of people in the streets who are passing time. Visit a family running a spaza shop to survive. Drive through the busy streets of any of our cities and speak to the young men and women handing

out CVs at intersections in their graduation gowns, still hopeful but almost out of faith.

These are not outliers. They are the face of South Africa's unemployment crisis. To claim we're at 10% is to erase them. To suggest the informal sector is the answer to youth unemployment is to tell people clinging to survival that they're actually thriving. It's not just misleading – it's an insult.

WE CAN'T SOLVE WHAT WE REFUSE TO FACE

There's a difference between optimism and denial. Optimism rolls up its sleeves and works. Denial changes the narrative and hopes the problems go away. South



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Africa is a young nation – with a growing, economically active, increasingly educated population. But we remain trapped in a paradox: high talent, high unemployment. This isn't because our people lack potential, or are lazy to work or seek work. It's because we haven't created enough pathways for them to thrive.

And that's the conversation we should be having – not debating whether the house is burning, but planning how we're going to put the fire out. Anything else is an obfuscation.

WHAT BUSINESS LEADERS MUST UNDERSTAND

When you speak as a CEO, you don't just represent shareholders. You influence public thinking, government planning, and the aspirations of young South Africans watching from the sidelines.

Leadership demands humility – and facts. If you've built and are running a successful business, congratulations. But that doesn't give you licence to invent your own statistics. The job of leadership is to challenge systems, not facts.

Stats SA is not the problem. The economic exclusion of millions is. Let's not confuse the two.

MY POSITION?

Facts First. Always.

South Africa doesn't need more false dawns, but it needs honest, data-backed leadership.

That's why I'm not here to defend a number – I'm here to defend the integrity of the process that arrived at it. Neither am I trying to sustain a pessimistic outlook, but am confronting a perpetration of



a falsehood. I believe in the power of institutions; institutions can only work if we trust them, fund them, and engage them honestly.

We need to restore that trust. And that starts with calling out misinformation – especially when it comes from high places.

WHAT THIS MOMENT DEMANDS

1. **Respect for Evidence** – We cannot redesign society based on gut feelings and boardroom chats. Any attempt to question unemployment data must be anchored in method, not instinct. Don't just say we need a new method to measure unemployment, propose it and demonstrate where it has been successfully tested.
2. **Empathy for the Excluded** – When we misrepresent unemployment, we're not just fudging numbers. We're telling millions that their daily struggles don't count.
3. **Leadership That Builds** – If we want to solve the unemployment crisis, we need a shared agenda: skills development, inclusive industrialisation, support for small enterprises, and honest in-

vestment in youth-led innovation.

These are not soundbites. They're solutions. And we cannot afford to waste another five-year cycle pretending otherwise.

A FINAL WORD: FROM DENIAL TO DUTY

We must all understand the cost of silence and the price of perception. Leadership is not about being perfect – it's about being accountable. We must be wary of undermining the very institutions we all depend on to navigate this country forward. The only way to fix what's broken is to confront it with honesty, courage, and a willingness to build – not just brand.

The youth must not allow their experiences to be dismissed by creative arithmetic. You are seen. You are counted.

Let's get back to the facts. Let's return to the work. This discussion is really bad to have in the context of stubbornly high unemployment, deep poverty and crippling inequality. Once we start on this journey, who knows what other facts will our guts lead us to challenging. ... ■

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■ By **BATHABILE DLAMINI**

MALAIKA Mahlatsi's critique of the proposed National Dialogue is searing, articulate, and rooted in righteous frustration. She is right to be outraged. She is right to interrogate the failures of the post-1994 dispensation. And she is right to demand action over endless talk. But where we differ is in the interpretation of what dialogue can be – and what it must become.

Dialogues, in a country suffocated by patriarchy, racial capitalism, structural violence, and generational dispossession, are not just platforms for polite engagement – they are battlegrounds for truth, justice, and power. When Malaika scratches beneath the surface and finds a distraction, I dig even deeper and see an opportunity: a site for working-class struggle, a gender justice revolu-

tion, and a radical reclamation of democratic agency.

To reduce national dialogue to elite manipulation is to cede political ground. We must not only speak truth to power. We must enter the arena, push against its limits, and give direction so that we all know where we are going.

Dialogues Are Part of Our Liberation Tradition – Not a Neoliberal Invention

The National Dialogue is not some modern performance borrowed from Western liberalism; it is not just a neoliberal agenda. It is part of our own revolutionary history. When the African National Congress convened the historic Kabwe Conference in 1985 while in exile, it did so under conditions of extreme pressure, growing internal dissent, the need for intro-

spection, and rising calls for the reassertion of democratic values within the movement. Kabwe was a consultative dialogue, and it gave rise to important strategic shifts, including the inclusion of more young people and women in leadership and a stronger internal democracy. This was not the only consultative conference of the ANC in exile; there were other consultative conferences that were able to redirect and refocus us to our agenda of the National Democratic Revolution.

We cannot dismiss today's dialogues while forgetting that dialogue is the very reason the ANC is still alive – it self-corrected through collective engagement, not by ignoring dissent.

Today's dialogue, while broader in scale, is rooted in this lineage. What is different is the level of inclusion.

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No longer limited to party members or liberation structures, this dialogue is open to every sector of society, from domestic workers to CEOs, from faith leaders to artists. It is underpinned by the belief that we all have a role in building the democratic state, not just through elections, but through continuous engagement and accountability.

Dialogues Have Been Radical Elsewhere – And They Can Be Here Too

Let us speak plainly: **dialogues are only empty if we allow them to be.** Across the world, they've been used to reimagine societies:

- In **Tunisia**, the 2013 National Dialogue stopped political violence in its tracks and created the foundation for a new constitution.
- In **Rwanda**, Gacaca dialogues enabled truth-telling and justice at a communal level.
- In **Colombia**, decades of war ended not only through armed negotiation but through structured community-based peace dialogues.
- In **Chile**, after Pinochet's dictatorship, national consultations shaped a new civic identity.

South Africa must not miss this opportunity to make our dialogue a site of reckoning, redirection, and rebirth. We must not forget that even after the apartheid state-sponsored violence, communities and organisations had to come together and build peace through dialogue processes. Some of us were young during those processes, and we were deeply involved in those peace talks as we were involved in defending our communities.

In olden days, communities used

to have **izinkundla**, and families used to have round-shaped dialogues where matters of families were addressed. This is proof that we were always involved in governance matters and dialogues from the lowest to the highest levels of our communities. Our family structure has drastically changed, and we have many broken families, child-headed households, single-parent families, and nuclear families that have separated young families from the support structures of older members of the family who used to pass norms, culture, and practice of the family to younger generations. The family structure that used to keep a strong bond is no longer there, or we have small remnants of the extended family. This is a discussion for another day.

Every member of society had a role to play, and I believe one of the roles of dialogues is going to do is to embrace every member of society so that we all feel grounded in the belief that we all have a role to play in building a strong government. Government is us, citizens, and we also have a role to play in building a united, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist, and prosperous country.

Gender-Based Violence and Femicide: A National Emergency Demanding Mass Dialogue

Let's be clear: GBV/F is not the responsibility of government alone. Women and girls are being killed and buried every day not because of policy gaps, but because of societal complicity



Without [measures such as the post-Genocide Gacaca court, the Abunzi mediation mechanism, the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission and the National Human Rights Commission] backed by law, Rwanda would not have recovered from the social and economic devastation of 1994 and risen to where it is today, not a pariah among nations but a proud and respected member of the international community.

Justice Sam Rugege

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from households to high offices. These crimes are deeply embedded in how masculinity is performed and protected across all sectors.

This National Dialogue must be a moment where:

- **Men are made to account – publicly, and without euphemisms.**
- **Survivors are heard, not as case studies but as leaders.**
- **Communities recommit to action, not mourning alone.**

As we mark 30 years since the Beijing Declaration, we must leverage this global milestone to demand more than promises. Let this dialogue not be symbolic; let it be a feminist intervention in the soul of the nation.

Yes, There Are Areas Where the ANC Has Not Performed Well or Could Have Done Better – But It Also Delivered

To rewrite post-apartheid history as a complete failure is an act of selective cynicism. The ANC, with all its missteps, has led processes that have:

- Extended free water and electricity to millions.
- Created one of the most expansive social protection systems in the Global South, including grants, human settlements, free ECD and primary, secondary, and high school education, food, and books, free healthcare services for pregnant women and toddlers, and many other baskets of services like the social relief of distress.
- Opened universities to working-class children and pioneered free ARVs at a time when Big Pharma stood in the way. We have also created a black middle class that, un-

fortunately by its nature, will keep on demanding more as this is the character of a capitalist class or society where the rich become richer and the poor become poorer.

These gains are not enough, but they are the foundation we now build upon, not the reason to tear everything down. When we make our demands, we must not destroy the little we have.

Dialogues Must Be Led From Below

Dialogues must not be elite because we will never be able to defend those dialogues. We want people's dialogues rooted in the daily struggles of ordinary people, grounded in movement, and bursting with radical possibility. The tavern, the taxi rank, the trade union office, the stokvels, the churches, students, learners, the unemployed, our kids that are getting finished by drugs in the street corners are the real parliaments of the people.

Dialogues must become the space where:

- The working class challenges monopoly capital and the youth must demand their future.
- Women expose patriarchy at every level of power and wage war against patriarchy, sexism, misogyny.
- The LGBTQIA+ community demands safety, dignity, and visibility.
- People with disabilities are given voice and agency – not pity.

A Call to Global Solidarity

This dialogue must also be internationally observed. We need allies from movements and institutions aligned with the MDGs,

Agenda 2063, and the fight against neoliberal exploitation.

We need those who believe in:

- **Creating jobs with dignity.**
- **Ending poverty and elite accumulation.**
- **Leaving no one behind.**

This is not a South African problem alone. It is a global crisis of inequality, and we need transnational struggle and solidarity as we are a product of solidarity.

This Is Our Moment – Let's Not Miss It

We are not blind to the manipulation of the past. We are not naïve about the risk of co-option. But we are also not foolish enough to abandon our tools because the state mishandles them.

The dialogue must become our space where we set the agenda, we hold power to account, and we lead the transformation. This is part of our journey to healing from the ravages of colonialism.

This is our time to explain to younger generations that freedom was not free and they are taking over a huge responsibility and tell them that they are better placed and well-positioned to take the country forward and that they have the responsibility to build a country where no one is oppressed because of race, class, and gender.

As Paulo Freire reminds us in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*: ***"To speak a true word is to transform the world."***

Let us speak.

Let us organise.

Let us transform. ■

Navigating realities:

What matters in making the GNU work

■ By **BUSANI NGCAWENI**

I participated in a panel at the Kingsmead Book Fair in Johannesburg a week ago. The session moderator used the opportunity to swiftly alter my role from an engaged invited author to an official in government.

The opportunity could not be missed to question me on the health of South Africa's Government of National Unity (GNU). My answer, outside of any formal mandate, was clear and confident: The GNU is stable. While some in the audience reacted with cynicism bordering on apprehension, my response is grounded in political realism, based on the evidence.

Drawing a parallel from the medical field, a 'stable patient' is out of immediate danger, capable of recovery and managing their condition, often with minimal support. Politically, this means the GNU remains viable and focused on its responsibility to implement mandates despite its contradictions and imperfections. I have facilitated strategy sessions of over thirty-two (32) departments and agencies led by leaders from all GNU partners. From such a deep scan of what is unfolding, akin to a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scan done by health professionals, I have an empirical sense of the patient's status.



My current assessment and proposition for the future builds on the theses of what it would take to make the GNU work, outlined in a year ago (ANC Today Edition?) when the GNU was formed. Central to these were propositions on the importance of shared purpose and operational clarity for GNU's success.

Today, we face a different reality: the GNU is no longer an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) patient but one managing unique chronic conditions while progressing toward recovery. Such recovery conditions vary across the GNU and are germane to each party as they contend with internal contradictions, often embodied in factionalism, leadership styles and talent variations. As with medical recovery, such conditional vari-

ations are a regular occurrence and cannot merely be treated as a crisis. They reflect a return to healthy political contestation.

Some internal and inter-party tensions are natural in a coalition context. What matters is how we manage and convert disagreement into constructive outcomes. The real test is not the absence of conflict, but the presence of maturity in resolving these. There might also be cultural differences, which can be shaped.

The Nature of Contradictions in the GNU

The most prominent GNU controversy so far has been on the budget. The contestations were, however, by far, rooted in a secondary, not primary, contradic-

tions. The fundamental incongruity can only be about how we think about and engage the Constitutional imperatives of equity and redress. Fortunately, when we look deeper, no fundamental ideological fracture (or primary contradiction) arises to a point of calls to amend the Constitution.

Aside from scraping the VAT increase, the now adopted budget is substantively the same. Calls from 'Abahambe' to 'Scrap the BEE' reflect political posturing more than deep-seated divisions. As the Constitution as a guard-rail, BEE employment equity laws cannot be scrapped, unless the preamble and all the equity and redress clauses are amended. Political noises aside, the GNU has demonstrated its viability and resilience.

However, there is always the danger of mismanaging contradictions. If left unchecked, poor politics could undermine those celebrating the GNU's achievements (government stability and agreement on a minimum programme of action) and embolden those who remain sceptical.

Yet, there are encouraging signs. The eventual successful tabling of the national budget signals institutional resilience. It was great that the budget process was tested to its limits, allowing us to check the system's buoyancy. Combining the budget with the adopted Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) gives us the foundation for focused governance.

As the party with the most seats, the ANC rightfully leads the GNU. It sets the tone in Cabinet formation and policy direction within a consultative framework. However, the party gains little short-



term political capital, particularly in the battle of public perception. Critiques such as 'enemy of the poor' continue to be echoed, especially amid challenges of slow growth, rampant crime and poor municipal performance.

As much as some called the second-largest party, the Democratic Alliance, 'our enemies'.

These internal contradictions are carefully managed and do not pose much of a danger to continuity or the forms that GNU took after the elections. The commitment to engage in the interest of all South Africans remains deep, and this orientation permeates into the broader politics of the GNU.

Engaging with the Practice

South Africa's experience with coalition governance is still evolving. When the GNU was formed, we entered uncharted waters. With nearly a year of experience behind us, we can now reflect on key patterns and emerging trends. Many current tensions are unsurprising, given the nature of electoral coalitions. Pre-existing rivalries and suspicions have carried over into the GNU, some-

times complicating collaboration. Ministers sometimes appear as GNU representatives in official settings but revert to opposition roles in party contexts. This duality reflects an unresolved political grief and a scramble for relevance in the social media age.

It is important to reiterate that institutional stability, not just political agreements, has kept the GNU on track. Core state functions have continued. Schools remain open, social grants are paid, the courts function and public services are delivered. This is no small feat for a growing democracy meandering around the complexity of multi-party governance. Our institutions, while still evolving, are resilient. They have provided the scaffolding within which this multi-party government can function.

Coalition dynamics often blur accountability. Ideological differences can delay decision-making or lead to superficial consensus. Cabinet decisions, which should carry significant weight, can sometimes be slowed down by those not emotionally attached to them. The GNU is navigating the tension between unity of purpose and partisan interests, especially

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as parties position themselves for future elections. Communication strategies, in particular, often ignore the collective nature of governance, reinforcing the perception of fragmented leadership.

Propositions for Strengthening the GNU

As we move forward, we should ideally shift from diagnosing dysfunction and negativity to proposing constructive pathways to manage further the contradictions arising from GNU arrangements. In the spirit of such an approach, I offer the following propositions for making the GNU more cohesive and effective, based on my own reading of the pulse, blood pressure and oxygen saturation:

Proposition One: *Entrenching Decision-Making Structures*

The Cabinet and its related structures should be re-emphasised as the central governance platform. Their decisions should be treated as binding, authoritative and communicated clearly across all levels of government.

Reasserting this constitutional principle reinforces collective accountability and ensures policy coherence.

Proposition Two: *Utilising the MTDP as a Common Reference Point*

The MTDP is the collective blueprint for government action. All GNU parties should have an abiding commitment to implement this shared national programme obsessively, superseding individual party manifestos. This alignment can strengthen accountability, streamline resource allocation and provide a clear benchmark for performance evaluation. For the majority of South Africans, the MTDP is all they have. For the investors, it is a framework for decision-making that embodies the country's investment case. To public servants, it is the source of work and actions taken.

Proposition Three: *Clarifying the Party-State Distinction*

GNU participants should distinguish between their roles as party members and government repre-

sentatives. While ideological diversity is inevitable, governance requires a unified front. When engaged in official decision-making, members of the Executive should prioritise the collective interest over partisan agendas.

Proposition Four: *Institutionalising Inter-Party Dialogue*

To pre-empt conflict and foster understanding, the GNU parties should observe the structures established by President Ramaphosa to resolve contradictions. This space allows political leaders to debate policy issues, air concerns and build consensus outside of formal Cabinet structures. Of course, there is an omnipresent danger of forum shopping, a chronic condition in nascent multi-party arrangements. We can draw further from other democracies on the structures and systems for party dialogue and sustaining commitment.

Proposition Five: *Coordinating Communication Protocols*

The GNU should reinforce its commitment to a coherent com-





munication strategy and protocols. This includes shared messaging, respect for designated government spokespeople, and clear lines of authority and accountability. Disjointed or contradictory public statements erode confidence and obscure the government's collective intent. Some may win supporters, but South Africa loses confidence in the democratic edifice. Government messaging should evolve to reflect the realities of power-sharing. The public should see one government speaking with one voice, even when parties differ internally.

Proposition Six: *Building on Positive Experiences*

The GNU should highlight and build on successful collaborations. Sharing positive case studies, lessons learned and innovations can foster a culture of continuous improvement and mutual recognition. Celebrating joint achievements reinforces the value of unity. In this instance, South Africa wins. Institutions do not run on autopilot. They require leadership at all levels. What will make the GNU is not only the President acting strongly, but also

each political principal exercising their agency, ethically and developmentally. All decisions should be in the national interest, even when the President is not watching. Ethical governance must be normalised as a practice, not a reaction to pressure.

Proposition Seven: *Establishing a Formal Dispute Resolution Mechanism*

Disagreements are inevitable. A formal process for resolving independent, fair and timely disputes can prevent conflicts from escalating. Such a mechanism would protect the integrity of the GNU and provide a structured outlet for addressing tensions. The larger modality exists as the clearing house for the GNU under the Deputy President, Paul Mashatile. There are also relevant structures for political level engagement. We may also want to give further thought to more technical-level channels for resolving disputes and establish further channels within legislative structures to deepen engagements.

Looking Ahead

Despite its secondary contradictions, the GNU remains stable

and politically viable. Its success depends not on the absence of difference, but on the maturity with which disagreements are managed. We are learning, adapting and refining our approach as we go.

This is not a moment for despair or triumphalism, but for pragmatic optimism. South Africa's democratic project has entered a new phase that demands collaboration, humility and clarity of purpose. The GNU represents a bold experiment in shared governance. It could redefine our political futures and offer a model of inclusive, effective leadership if managed well.

The task ahead is not easy, but it is necessary. We have the tools, the experience and the mandate. Public administration is stable.

The fight against wrongdoing is intensifying.

What remains is the political will to make this work, not for the sake of any party, but for the people of South Africa, who deserve a government that thinks, listens, delivers and endures. ■



Ageism in the Age of Renewal – Can the ANC afford any room for adventurism?

A Rejoinder

■ By **MIKE RAMAGOMA AND JOE MATHEBULA**

THE recent call by the President of the ANCYL for “pensioners” to be excluded from future leadership roles in the ANC and state machinery, has been typically bold on their part. It’s not unusual in the nature of the League, to shake the Movement with radical proposition that challenge the norm. In fact in his initial response to the call comrade Joe Mathebula, himself a veteran leader of the ANCYL asserts correctly that “ordinarily we should

allow the youth to be vibrant, to think out of the box, to be spirited, and confident and militant.”

Agreeing fully with this assertion by Cde Mathebula, whose response brought the issue to my attention in the first place, the question must however be asked about what this call by the President of the ANCYL really means, and most importantly, how does it measure up as a useful contribution to ongoing efforts for the renewal of the Movement.

An interrogation of this stance, in the above context, is necessary given the ANCYL’s own historical role in shaping the ANC’s policies and political direction.

The Dangers of the Return of Shallow Ageism in Our Politics

In essence the ANCYL President has called for an age limit both in the structures of leadership, and by extension, participation in the life of the ANC, which is essentially

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about leadership of society in the classical sense. This will also have far reaching implications on the provisions of our constitution that does not create an age limit in as far as the right to vote and be voted for.

Although the call is not new, and has not succeeded before, it is worrying that, as in the past, it is always made in the context of an upcoming elective conference and meant solely to position a specific profile of leaders to ascend to leadership positions. It follows after the recent call by senior leaders of the League to be given their “blue lights” – a reference to allocation of more executive seats for ANCYL members in Cabinet and Provincial Executives. This even as the ANC has a reduced electoral majority and governing through tricky coalition agreements with opposition political parties. In the context of renewal therefore, the ANC, and all progressive forces, are faced with a complex task of defending the NDR in the context a declining majority, a political development that posits a threat to the fortunes of the revolution and its recent gains.

The resurgence of these calls, especially in their most vulgarised form should be considered weird, especially since the notion of generational mix is widely accepted and demonstrated in our Movement.

In this particular case, the ANCYL has called for the exclusive valorisation of youthfulness as a primary qualification for leadership. This phenomenon, rooted in shallow ageism, posits that younger leaders are inherently better suited to drive revolutionary change and govern effectively solely based on their age. This thinking is pushed for its sake without any further political justification and hangs loosely outside the current efforts for renewal. It overlooks the importance of content, capacity, and experience in governance.

The Pitfalls of Age-Based Leadership

The assumption that younger leaders are more innovative, dynamic, and capable of driving change is overly simplistic. While youthfulness can bring fresh perspectives and energy, it is not a guarantee of effective leadership.

Experience, wisdom, and a deep understanding of complex systems are essential for navigating the intricacies of leadership and governance. By prioritizing age over experience, we risk sacrificing depth for superficiality.

The Dangers of Exclusionary Politics

This emphasis on youthfulness, for just its sake, can lead to the exclusion of capable and experienced individuals who could contribute significantly to governance. This approach undermines the principles of meritocracy and inclusivity, potentially depriving the country of valuable perspectives and expertise.

Given the current challenges facing the Movement and the country, maybe it is high time that we unite behind the imperative to raise the bar in our articulation of leadership choices. We need to move away from the recent trends that the noisiest amongst us should speak and drum out the rest. We need to reject articulations of leadership choices which are not based on the substance of our revolution and the challenges faced by our society.

True leadership requires a deep understanding of revolutionary theory, a commitment to addressing the socio-economic challenges facing the people, and a willingness to take concrete actions, with evidence-based decision making.

In essence we require a collective and balanced leadership that prioritises substance over style.

A Balanced Approach

Rather than just lifting age as the only requirement, we should focus on fostering a leadership culture

Delegates at the 55th National Conference held in 2022 at NASCREC.



that values:

- **Meritocracy:** our leaders should be selected based on their skills, experience, and vision.
- **Diversity:** a diverse leadership cohort that brings varied perspectives and capacity.
- **Capacity building:** we need to invest in leadership development programs that can enhance the skills of leaders across age groups.

True to its relevance, the ANCYL should emphasize the need for cadre preparation, hopefully from a young age for roles in leadership. Together we must focus on the need to improve the organisational capacity of the ANC and the enhancement of state capacity to deliver and solve the problems facing our country and our people.

The ANCYL should be at the centre of our renewal efforts as it represents our best chance to build rebuild and invigorate our leadership capacity by developing future leaders with strong moral compass, integrity and vision, equipping them to drive the transformation of our society.

As comrade Joel Netshitenzhe reminded us when he wrote on a similar matter towards the 2022 55th Conference of the ANC, ***“The issue of organisational renewal is an existential one for the ANC, and it should indeed exercise the mind of young progressives, because on your shoulders rest the prospects of success.”***

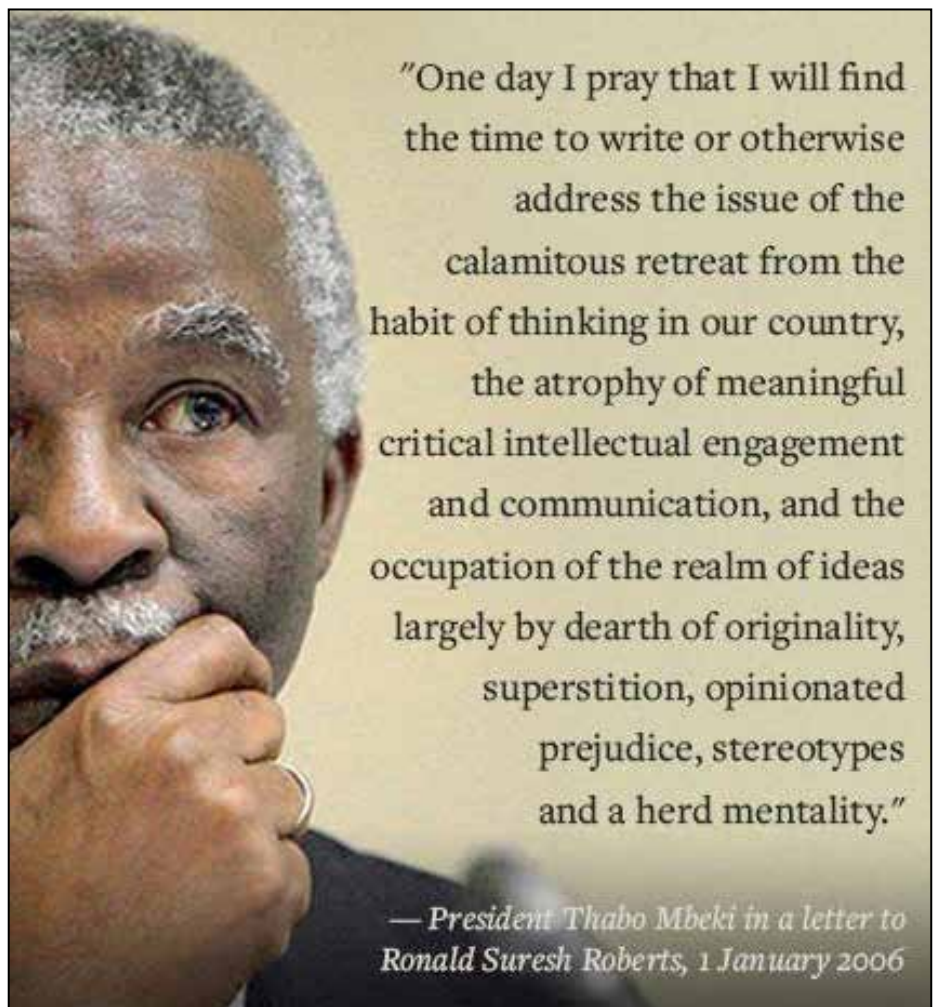
He also adds that this ***“organisational renewal, is not for its own sake; it is meant to be a platform to facilitate the realisation of the Movement’s vision.”***



In that context therefore, the ANCYL should continue on its current path to revitalize its activist roots, reclaiming its legacy as a driving force for progressive change within the ANC and the country. The League is already doing very well in this regard. Any organisational and political gains it leverages as part of this though, should not be

squandered at the alter of destructive adventures but in helping to shape the ANC capacitation and direction for renewal, ensuring the Movement remains relevant and responsive to the youth’s needs, and contribute to South Africa’s transformation.

As we conclude on a rather lighter note, it must be noted that the trend of leadership globally negates this notion of ageism as a condition for leadership. This is reflected in the original BRICS countries, where all the five leaders currently are over 65. The same can be said for most of the G7 countries leadership. But the general trends throughout the world point to a world led by people who are on average over 65 years, including China, Russia and Cuba. ■



“All National Groups Shall Have Equal Rights”: Reaffirming the National Democratic Promise

■ By **FAIEZ JACOBS**

ALL *national groups shall have equal rights!*” is the second Clause of the Freedom Charter adopted in 1955.

As we mark the **70th anniversary of the Freedom Charter**, we are called to return to its founding clauses not as nostalgic relics, but as revolutionary commitments whose realisation remains urgent. Among the most transformative and yet most difficult to fulfil is Clause Two: “*All national groups shall have equal rights.*”

This clause called for more than legal equality meaning the eradication of racial discrimination and the promotion of equality. It demanded a new social contract where every race, class, cultural group, and gender could live with dignity, security, opportunity, and recognition. It envisioned a South Africa that rejected the logic of racial hierarchy and economic exclusion, essentially a home for all, built on justice.

And yet, as we reflect on 31 years of democracy, we must ask with honesty: Have we given full effect to this clause? Who are its victims and beneficiaries? Who remains excluded? What must be done differently over the next

30 years to give life to this powerful, unfinished vision? Let’s admit, we are still grappling with racial tension, narrow ethnic and tribal mobilisation, identity politics, deep economic disparities and persistent social inequalities.

From the Doctors’ Pact to Kliptown: The Origins of Clause Two

The roots of Clause Two stretch back to 1947, when three visionary leaders Dr A.B. Xuma (ANC), Dr Yusuf Dadoo of the South African Indian Congress (SAIC), and Dr Monty Naicker of the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) signed the Doctors’ Pact. This was not mere-

ly an alliance between individuals or organisations, but a strategic breakthrough: the important realisation that only a united front of Africans, Coloureds, Indians, and progressive Whites could dismantle apartheid and build a democratic society.

This ethos was later institutionalised in the Congress Alliance, which mobilised mass-based organisations the ANC, SAIC, Coloured People’s Congress (CPC), Congress of Democrats (COD), and Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) each organising within their respective communities, but united under a shared vision of non-racial liberation. When



the Freedom Charter was adopted in 1955 in Kliptown, it marked the first time in history that all the oppressed peoples of South Africa had jointly and publicly declared their vision for a just, equal, and democratic country.

Clause Two thus emerged from both separate mobilisation and shared vision. It was a radical departure from apartheid's ideology of racial superiority, ethnic fragmentation, and patriarchal domination. Non-racialism, central to the ANC's philosophical underpinnings, proposes a society wherein race ceases to determine social and economic outcomes. However, non-racialism is not synonymous with "colour-blindness," but rather emphasizes redressing historical disadvantages linked explicitly to race. Thus, Clause Two demands systemic changes in power structures, social relations, and resource allocation to facilitate true equality. This vision suggests that non-racial equality cannot exist without challenging deeply entrenched and emerging social patterns of racial discrimination and privilege. How does this foundational ideal measured up against and contrast with the lived realities of South Africans in 2025.

31 Years of Democracy: Progress and the Persistence of Inequality

The democratic breakthrough of 1994 gave full legal effect to Clause Two. We dismantled apartheid legislation, instituted a rights-based Constitution, and created democratic institutions representing all people. We passed affirmative action laws, implemented BBBEE, and restructured the state to reflect the demographic and political will of the majority.



Just a normal day on the Cape Flats in the Western Cape.

Yet the structural inequalities that Clause Two aimed to end particularly in economic power, spatial justice, and gender equity still define daily life for most.

a) **Racialised Economic Disparities**

- White South Africans, just 7.6% of the population, still control over 70% of private farmland and approximately 80% of JSE-listed assets. Hence the narrative of "white genocide" is critically misleading, often propagated through misinformation.
- African households continue to have the lowest income and wealth, and are most concentrated in informal settlements, rural poverty, and underserved townships.
- Coloured South Africans particularly in the Western Cape often face a unique double marginalisation, excluded from the benefits of elite Black empowerment while simultaneously overlooked in national redress narratives, and their persistent socio-economic exclusion and underrepresentation must be urgently and sincerely addressed to

achieve true non-racial equity and social justice.

- Indian South Africans, while showing progress in education and enterprise, remain concentrated in geographically and economically constrained urban areas.

b) **Gendered, and Class Exclusion**

- Black women, particularly rural African women and women-headed households, remain the poorest group across all racial categories.
- Over 58% of unemployed people in South Africa are women, with African women hardest hit.
- Only 15% of land reform beneficiaries are women. Women receive less than 10% of government contracts in procurement and SMME support.

c) **Educational Disparities**

Education, crucial for social mobility and equality, remains starkly divided along racial lines. Coloured South Africans face severe educational disparities rooted in historical neglect, spatial inequality, and systemic underinvestment. Nearly half of

Coloured learners drop out before Grade 12, and only 29.7% achieve bachelor-level passes compared to over 60% for White and Indian learners. Tertiary participation remains alarmingly low at just 17.5%, compared to White: 58.5%; Indian: 43.1% and African: 21.8%. NEET rates (youth not in employment, education, or training) for Coloured youth hover around 40–43%, among the highest nationally with African youth around 35–38%. Gendered challenges further deepen this crisis as Coloured boys face high school disengagement and incarceration (prison) rates, while girls are disproportionately affected by teen pregnancy, GBV, and caregiver burdens. In communities like the Cape Flats, schools are often overcrowded, understaffed, and disrupted by gang violence, lacking psychosocial support and relevant curriculum content.

This multidimensional exclusion demands urgent, targeted interventions bursary pipelines, after-school programs, mentorship, trauma-informed pedagogy, and youth employment pathways designed specifically for Coloured communities to redress these entrenched inequities and prevent the entrenchment of a “lost generation.”

All of these realities reveal a gap between formal equality and substantive equality. The problem is not that Clause Two failed the problem is that our post-apartheid economic and social model has not fully delivered on it.

Organising National Groups for the Next 30 Years

If Clause Two is to define the next phase of our national democratic revolution, we must go beyond slogans and ceremoni-

al commemorations. We must organise and mobilise national groups anew not in the spirit of separateness, but with the strategic clarity that different communities face different obstacles, and need targeted, locally responsive pathways to equality.

Reclaiming the National Question

We must reject attempts to racialise suffering, divide the poor, or trivialise genuine grievance. Instead:

- Coloured communities need focused youth employment strategies, school retention campaigns, drug rehabilitation partnerships, and economic zones tailored to areas like Cape Flats and Eldorado Park.
- African townships need formalised land rights, crime prevention through urban design, and SMME support that builds real value chains beyond spaza-level survival.
- Indian communities require targeted infrastructure renewal, disaster mitigation in urban peripheries, and equity in public sector contracting.
- White South Africans must be partners in building a non-racial society, with shared contributions to social justice, land reform, and enterprise mentorship.

We must revive the “*organise, educate, mobilise*” model in a way that speaks to today’s youth: through civic technology, storytelling platforms, WhatsApp mobilisation, and cultural renewal.

Practical Strategies to Realise Equal Rights

To move Clause Two from aspiration to implementation, we propose the following actions:

Targeted Local Development Compacts

Establish People’s Development Forums like Mandela’s RPD Forums at municipal level, where communities help co-create service delivery solutions. These must be inclusive of gender, youth, religious and civil actors.

Equity-Driven Resource Allocation responding to top 20 Poverty Hotspots

South Africa’s deepest poverty is concentrated in 20 geo-spatially identifiable rural and urban hotspots, affecting over 16 million people close to 27% of the national population. Rural districts such as OR Tambo, Alfred Nzo, and Joe Gqabi (Eastern Cape); Vhembe and Sekhukhune (Limpopo); Zululand and uMzinyathi (KwaZulu-Natal); Ehlanzeni and Gert Sibande (Mpumalanga); and Ngaka Modiri Molema (North West) exhibit multidimensional poverty rates exceeding 60%, characterised by inadequate infrastructure, under-resourced schools, and chronic dependence on social grants. Urban deprivation is most acute in high-density, low-income townships and informal settlements including Diepsloot, Orange Farm, and Mamelodi (Gauteng); Khayelitsha, Delft, Hanover Park, and Manenberg (Western Cape); Umlazi, Inanda, and KwaMashu (KZN); and Mdantsane (Eastern Cape).

These poverty pockets are defined by high youth unemployment, school dropout, housing instability, and gender-based violence, with African and Coloured populations particularly women and youth most affected. To address this entrenched inequality, government must leverage geo-spatial poverty data to guide targeted development budgeting. A Township Inequality Index inte-

grated into Presidency, Treasury and COGTA planning can ensure that public investment is spatially just, equity-driven, and directed toward historically excluded communities where the need is greatest. This was done in President Mbeki's Presidential Urban and Rural Renewal Programmes.

Gender Transformation as a Priority

- Institutionalise 50/50 gender budgeting at all levels of government.
- Make care work a formalised sector, employing thousands of women in early childhood development, elder care, and health promotion.
- Fund GBV response infrastructure with dedicated percentages from national and provincial health and safety budgets.

Inclusive Economic Empowerment

- Shift from elite BBBEE to Community-Based Enterprise Development, where cooperatives and informal businesses can access direct state funding and skills.
- Introduce a Solidarity Wealth Tax on ultra-high net-worth individuals and trusts to fund education, housing and land redistribution.

Non-Racial Youth Development

Launch a National Non-Racialism Youth Corps, linking urban and rural youth across race and language through service, tech, arts and sport, reviving the spirit of unity from the Freedom Charter era.

The South Africa We Must Build

The South Africa we want is not colour-blind it is consciously in-

clusive. It does not flatten difference; it affirms dignity. Clause Two is not about identity politics it is about systemic justice.

The South Africa We Want must be one where:

- Equality is both a right and a reality, not a privilege of birth.
- Citizenship is shared, regardless of surname, skin colour, or language.
- Opportunity is expanded, not hoarded.
- Belonging is cultivated, not negotiated by political expedience.

The ANC must recommit to building a home for all. That means:

- Restoring the credibility of our empowerment efforts.
- Expanding the social wage and public employment for the poor.
- Institutionalising accountability and ending elite capture.
- Rebuilding the Congress Alliance spirit not through nostalgia, but new organisational methods rooted in today's technologies, demographics, and material needs.

Conclusion: From Paper Rights to Lived Dignity

Clause Two at 70 is a mirror and

a map. It shows us how far we've come and how far we have yet to go.

Let us reclaim its original spirit. Let us resist false narratives of them and us, identity politics, race war or victimhood competition. Let us deepen our commitment to non-racialism not as an abstract idea, but as a lived economic, social, and cultural practice. Let us celebrate our diversity not as a threat, but as the source of our collective strength.

If we do this work especially now with THE NATIONAL DIALOGUE organising every community, respecting each group's dignity, and aligning national policy to local realities we will fulfil the greatest promise of our struggle: that South Africa, long divided by design, can truly be a home for all who live in it and realise equal rights and justice for all.

Let us reaffirm it not just in speeches, but in action. **"All National Groups Shall Have Equal Rights!"**. Let this not be an aspiration. Let it be our legacy. ■

Faiez Jacobs is a Political Strategist, former ANC Member of Parliament and Western Cape Provincial Secretary.



The Crisis of Rotating Corruption: The National Secondment Scandal and the Collapse of Consequence Management

■ By **DR CHE SELANE**

ACROSS all spheres of South African government (national, provincial, and local) a dangerous and deeply entrenched culture has taken root. It is a culture that erodes accountability, betrays public trust, and undermines ethical governance. At its centre, is the quiet and systematic recycling of corrupt managers through secondment or redeployment, rather than dismissal or prosecution.

This trend of offering “*soft landings*” to transgressors under the pretext of administrative reshuffling, is not merely poor governance. It is a structural failure and a betrayal of our democracy, because millions of our citizens depend on honest and effective public service. It is a loud indictment of a consequence management system that exists largely on paper and fails spectacularly in practice.

In department after department, and in state-owned entities across the country, this troubling pattern has emerged. Senior officials accused, or even found guilty of financial misconduct, dereliction of duty, or maladministration are not held accountable. Instead, they are quietly seconded, redeployed, or even promoted to



new positions, often with greater responsibility and access to resources. These bureaucratic manoeuvres bury wrongdoing rather than confronting it. They protect the powerful and silence the ethical. In doing so, corruption is institutionalised by eroding the culture of integrity that our public service is meant to embody.

At the heart of this crisis is a deeply flawed consequence management framework that lacks teeth, coherence, and political will. Though policies exist, they are poorly implemented, inconsistently enforced, and riddled with loopholes. There is no centralised system to track or flag officials under investigation

or with records of misconduct. Departments function in silos, creating fertile ground for repeat offenders to evade detection and accountability simply by transferring them across institutions. The disciplinary processes are regularly delayed, manipulated, or abandoned. Some officials retire early with full benefits before their hearings are concluded; others negotiate golden handshakes that shield their misconduct from public scrutiny. In many instances, investigations are derailed by political interference or a deliberate failure to act. The result is a public service where wrongdoing is tolerated, transparency is elusive, and the wheels of justice turn far too slowly at all.

This failure of accountability is not abstract because it has material and moral consequences. Corruption diverts billions from services that the people of this country desperately need. It delays infrastructure, disrupts schooling, cripples healthcare, and bankrupts municipalities. But beyond the financial toll, there is a spiritual and civic collapse. Citizens see their country bleeding from wounds inflicted by insiders who are never held accountable. They witness the same individuals, implicated in mismanagement, resurface in new roles with little resistance or consequence. This undermines public confidence in democratic institutions and deepens disillusionment with the state. In the absence of consequence, South Africa is not a developmental state, it becomes a syndicate dressed as government.

What South Africa needs now is not more rhetoric, but bold, systemic, and enforceable reforms.

To break this toxic cycle, is the need to review and overhaul the consequence management policy. This must be done to establish non-negotiable penalties for various categories of misconduct, from immediate suspension to permanent disqualification from public service. Despite these, government must create a centralised digital database of all officials under investigation or sanctioned for misconduct. This must be compulsory to consult before any secondment, redeployment, or appointment. All disciplinary cases must be resolved within a set timeframe (e.g., 90 days). Delays should automatically trigger escalation to oversight authorities such as the Public Service Commission or National Treasury.

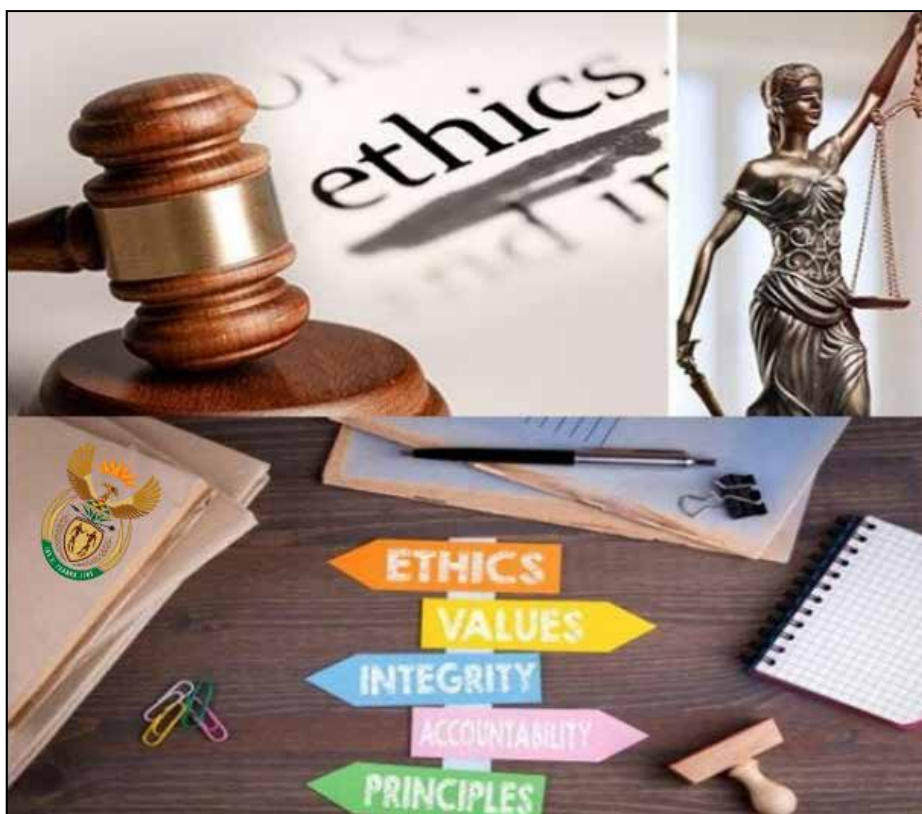


Those who are in parliament and provincial legislatures must demand quarterly consequence management reports and hold accounting officers personally liable for inaction. Furthermore, the legal protections and incentives for those who expose corruption must be strengthened. A democracy that punishes truth-tellers is on a path to ruin. The department and every state entities must publicly disclose the outcomes of misconduct cases. Citizens have a right to know who is held accountable

in their name. This is not merely a governance challenge, it is a national moral reckoning. If South Africa is to honour the values of its Constitution and the legacy of its liberation, it must stop shielding the corrupt. Consequence management cannot be symbolic. It must be visible, reliable, and non-negotiable.

Let the message echo in every office of power that, if you steal from the people, you will not be recycled. You will be removed, prosecuted, and held to account. The future of our country and the lives of generations to come depends on an ethical, accountable, and responsive government. The time for half-measures has long passed. The time for consequence is now. ■

Dr Che Selane is a legal scholar and public servant with expertise in governance, ethics, and legislative oversight. He writes in his personal capacity.





A REVIEW OF PEERS?

■ By **FEZILE KIES**

COMRADE Fikile Mbalula, in nearly all his public appearances – especially at party gatherings – discusses or highlights the importance of a peer review mechanism.

He emphasizes, *“When individuals make themselves eligible for a position, we should pay attention to insights from their peers about them.”* This peer review acts as a form of comradely evaluation, serving not only as a testament to one’s presence in a movement but also as a character analysis. Those who have shared experiences with you in challenging situations are often in a better position to assess your potential for leadership. This approach would be straightforward if leadership

requirements hinged solely on peer testimonials.

The review that Mbalula advocates is crucial for safeguarding against the rise of charlatans and impostors – those who don our symbolic attire, chant our songs, and articulate the struggles of the masses, all while pursuing their own self-interests.

This perspective is intriguing, and I can only imagine the invaluable insights that those who have witnessed your growth could provide.

Ideally, friends and individuals should conduct a peer review with a broader outlook and the ability to judge objectively. However, the shared experiences born from mutual life events can

make impartiality a challenge, as personal relationships may cloud judgment.

In his seminal book, ***“Time Is No Measure”***, Comrade Vusi Mavimbela writes: *“It is not the length of time spent in the liberation movement that accurately measures a revolutionary. Time is not the measure. It is the total of all contributions, assets, and liabilities they bear. The memory and legacy each leaves reflect the good or bad that they have imprinted on the people’s yearning for emancipation.”*

Consider Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma as examples. The two were known to be best friends, inseparable since their return from exile, and they rose to notable

positions together. In 1991, Zuma's election to one of the top five leadership roles exemplified their strength, particularly as many other revered leaders and brilliant minds of the movement gathered during a time filled with the promise of freedom. Yet, Zuma's peers find it challenging to articulate what qualities they saw in him that justified his election to such a powerful position, considering the leadership cohort included many impressive individuals.

There must have been something remarkable about Zuma that set him apart. Even when the National Executive Committee relieved him of his position as Deputy President, Thabo Mbeki sought Nelson Mandela's advice. Although Mandela clarified that he wouldn't dictate to the President what to do, he underscored that Zuma was a man of the people who was deeply loved. So, what is it about Zuma that remains unexplained?

Is it sufficient to have fought alongside a comrade in the trenches to qualify as a leader?

According to the 2023 Afrobarometer, only 28% of South Africans trust political leaders.

Is a comradely witness sufficient for positional advancement, as articulated by Fikile Mbalula? This question is critical because a comradely witness moves beyond conventional credential verification, prioritizing the experiential testimony of a fellow comrade.

While credential verification, backed by a credible witness, serves as an essential quality control mechanism for revolutionary accountability, it raises the question of how we can navigate internal leadership selection. We



must balance competence verification with character assessment while demanding evidence of performance under three revolutionary pressures: organisational discipline, ideological consistency, and crisis navigation.

This mechanism fundamentally relies on the diverse perspectives and evaluative courage within the organisation – qualities that set it apart from friendship networks or factional endorsements.

No liberation movement can solely rely on historical bonds to ensure the integrity of its succession. We must broaden our leadership selection criteria beyond ANC history to encompass geopolitical literacy, strategies for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and transnational crisis management. We must combine leaders with experiential depth and contemporary relevance to effectively assess governance competencies in the digital age.

Mbalula rightly points out that Zuma's peers elevated him to the position of Deputy President from 1999 to 2005. They were aware of his background but failed to adhere to necessary procedural standards, allowing his credentials as a liberation fighter, his romanticism, and his anti-apartheid symbolism to overshadow the essential requirements for the role. In today's world, we cannot afford

to repeat this mistake. We must uphold the rigor that the founding leaders – Mandela, Tambo, Sisulu, and Mbeki – maintained, which was neglected during Zuma's rise. The disastrous consequences of this oversight are evident.

We must confront our relationship with the truth and contemporary realities.

What qualifications, beyond ANC literacy, should current or prospective ANC leaders possess?

We cannot overlook the importance of a rigorous selection process, as was evident in Zuma's rise to power. It is essential to critically evaluate those who wish to lead – not just as our peers, but also to determine if they are ready and capable of leading a South Africa that is increasingly polarized and faces deep, structural and systemic issues, including high levels of unemployment and inequality that are among the highest in the world.

Beyond having a membership card and being able to say, "*I know this comrade; we were in the same trenches,*" what else is required to elevate the ANC to its next level of development? ■

Fezile Kies is a member of the ANC Chapman Moale branch, Ward 4, Tsantsabane in the Northern Cape.

THE BLOOD OF THE PAST WILL NOT BE WIPE BY POETIC RAGE:

A Response to Douglas Mthukwane's Attack on BBBEE

■ By **STAN ITSHEGETSENG**

COMRADE Mthukwane accuses me of mistaking his polemic for cosplay. Let's correct the record: it's not your ideology that offends — it's your romanticism without responsibility.

You call your article a “*comradely whipping*.” But comradeship without accountability is simply narcissism in struggle fatigues. The ANC didn't survive sabotage, infiltration, and exile to be lectured by someone who treats Mao and Slovo like mixtape quotes.

Your language is fire. But you confuse arson with analysis. Your pen is passionate — yet strategically pointless.

You mistake class struggle for a solo performance.

You reduce BBBEE to a betrayal because it has not yet created utopia. But struggle is not a binary. There is no single-policy messiah that can undo centuries of land theft, slave wages, and epistemicide.

We use what exists within the architecture of a capitalist economy to redistribute, reconfigure, and reorganize power — legally, institutionally, and intergenerationally.

The fact that BBBEE isn't perfect is not evidence of its failure — it's a call for intensification, not abandonment.

You spit on the scaffolding because it isn't a palace. Meanwhile, we are building — slowly, painfully, but strategically.

You demand revolution, but fear administration.

You romanticize revolt but insult those in the trenches of policy, law, and statecraft who must negotiate gains inch by inch, within a hostile global economic system, under ratings agency threats, litigation traps, and inherited fiscal frameworks.

We were not given this democracy. We negotiated it. And we must govern it — not poeticize it to death.

You speak of Sandton and Galeshewe as binaries. Yet those Sandton boardrooms you scoff at? We occupy them to redirect capital. You don't transform capital by yelling at it — you repurpose it, regulate it, and eventually redefine ownership itself.

YOU DON'T WANT A STRATEGY. YOU WANT A SPECTACLE.

You reject the 17% Black management figure as assimilation. But let's interrogate that. Who pushed that number upward?



Who drove EE compliance through legislative force, sector charters, verification mechanisms, and procurement policy?

Certainly not the keyboard guerillas of #Mthukwaneism. It was the very policies you mock.

You ask what BBBEE has delivered. I ask you:

Where were you when we drafted the ICT Sector Code?

Where were you when we fought court battles to defend the Employment Equity Act from white monopoly litigation?

Where were you when we faced internal sabotage from self-enriching cadres AND external resistance from anti-transformation lobbies?

Answer: Tweeting from Gale-shewe.

THIS IS NOT YOUR REVOLUTION TO APPROVE.

You claim not to write for likes, but your language reeks of performative purity – designed to gain applause from those who want utopia without governance and radicalism without reading minutes.

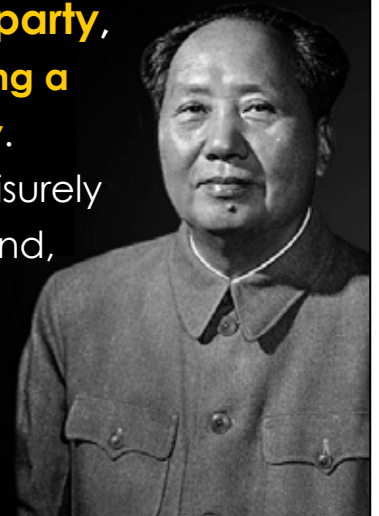
We in the trenches don't have the luxury of declaring policy failures from afar. We refine, we adapt, we fight internal corruption, and we continue the long march through institutions.

Your assertion that transformation “looks like Bentleys in the township” is a cheap, populist insult. For every corrupt tenderpreneur, there are 10,000 township children whose parents can now buy school shoes, thanks to state

A revolution is not a dinner party, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery.

It cannot be so refined, so leisurely and gentle, so temperate, kind, courteous, restrained and magnanimous.

Mao Zedong



procurement set-asides and preferential supplier status.

You don't see that. Because you've mistaken revolution for rage – and anger for analysis.

IF THE TABLE IS ON FIRE, WE DON'T LEAVE — WE REBUILD IT.

You quote Slovo, but you forget his warning: “*Revolutionaries who mistake slogans for strategy often sabotage the struggle from within.*”

We aren't sleepwalking through history, my brother. We are building under fire. We are defending transformation against the DA's court attacks, white capital's lobbying, and ideological vanity projects that mistake critique for contribution.

THERE IS NO SHORTCUT THROUGH THE FLAMES.

I will not apologise for building within the system — because I am also redefining the system from within. You call it assimilation. I call it long-term hegemonic struggle.

You write manifestos. We write

regulations.

You fantasize revolution. We institutionalize it.

You brand dissent. We build democracy.

I do not fear your pen.

I fear that young Black minds will mistake your performance for policy.

That they will confuse fire for foundation.

That they will learn to scream at the table, but never build one.

Let it be known:
The revolution is not poetry.
It is policy.
It is procurement.
It is power.

And power, my brother, does not clap back.

It governs. ■

Stan Itshegetseng is a member, of the Vuyani Mabaxa Branch (Ward 27, Zone 10) and an NEC Member of the Progressive Professionals Forum (PPF). He writes in his personal capacity.

Equality and Inclusion in our lifetime

■ By **TSHEHOFATSO CHAUKE ADONIS**

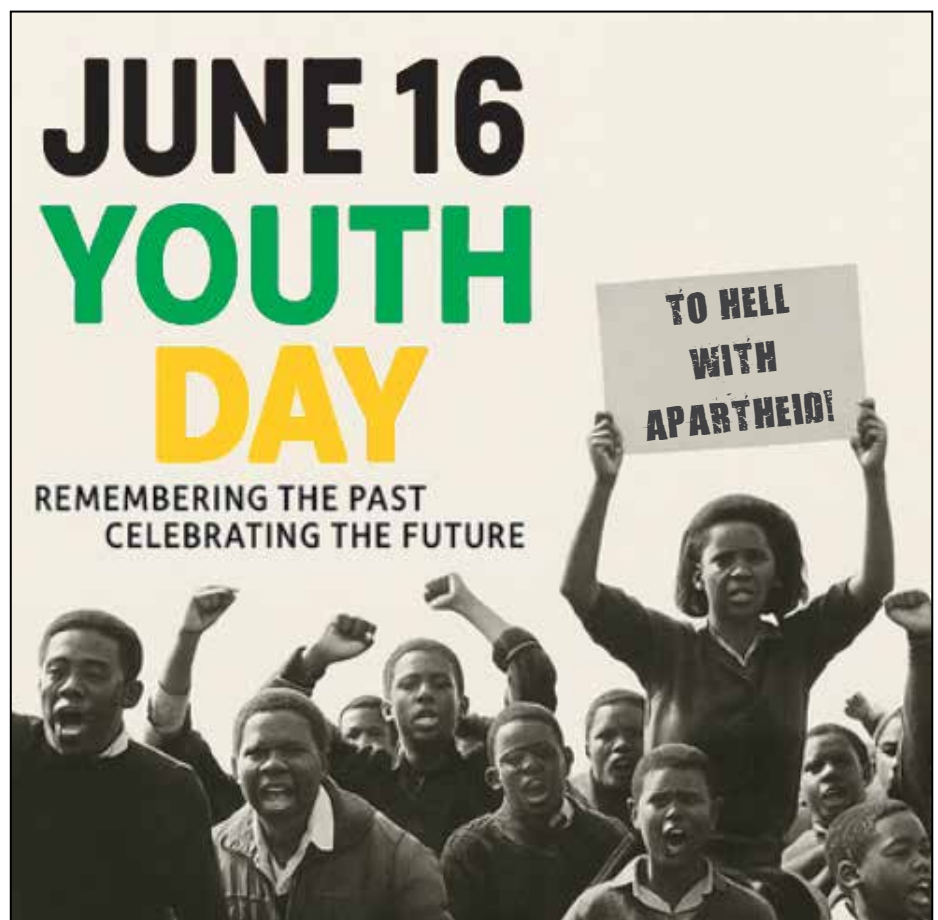
EVERY year on June 16, we gather as a nation to commemorate Youth Day – a powerful reminder of the courageous young souls of 1976 who defied the odds, raised their voices, and changed the course of South Africa's history. Their legacy is a mirror in which we, the youth of today, constantly examine our progress, our pain, and our potential.

This day is more than just a date on the calendar; it is a call to action – a reflection of how far we've come and a challenge to dream and do more. It is a time to honour the past, engage with the present, and shape the future.

Our country's youth has endured generations of struggle. From apartheid to inequality, from systemic exclusion to economic hardship – young people have never been passive participants in our history. We have fought, marched, spoken, innovated, created, and led. We continue to do so today, carrying the flame lit in Soweto all those years ago.

However, it would be a disservice to our collective journey if we did not ask:

Where are we now? Are we closer to the dreams that so many died for? Are we living in a South Africa where opportunity, justice, and dignity are truly for all?



As a proud young African woman with a disability, I speak not only from the heart but from lived experience. This Youth Day, young people with disabilities reflect on a journey that is layered with both resilience and resistance. We have been overlooked, underestimated, and underrepresented – yet we are rising.

We have contributed meaningfully to activism, innovation, community building, education, and economic development. We

have refused to be left behind, and today we call – boldly and unapologetically – for integration, not isolation. We demand access to equal opportunities, to education systems that are inclusive and accessible, to workspaces that embrace our talents without barriers or limitations. We call for economic and social justice, not just for us, but for all.

We, the youth of today – disabled and non-disabled, from rural villages to urban centres, in classrooms,

in the arts, in community projects, in the informal and formal sector are united in our vision for a South Africa that is safer, more prosperous, and truly inclusive.

We call for:

- Economic justice that provides employment opportunities without discrimination.
- An inclusive education system where no child is left behind – not because of ability, background, gender, or geography.
- A South Africa without barriers, where accessibility is a right, not a favour.
- A society that believes in its youth, not as problems to manage, but as leaders to support and elevate.

To the Youth of Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

To the youth of 1976 – we honour you. Your courage taught us that silence is not an option.

To the youth of today – your energy, your passion, and your refusal to settle for less are the hope of this nation. Continue to rise. Continue to challenge. Continue to build.

To the youth of tomorrow – may you inherit a country that has learned from its past and invested in your dreams. We are working hard to plant seeds so you may live in a land of equality, dignity, and justice.

Let it be said, without doubt: young people are ready to lead. Young people have always led. From the student movements to innovation labs, from the streets to Parliament we are not waiting for permission. We are claiming our place and taking responsibility for shaping the society we

want to see.

To every young South African: rise in your diversity. Whether you are a young mother or father, a person with a disability, a queer youth, an artist, a student, a worker, or an activist – you are enough.

You are powerful. You are needed.

Together, let us rise – united in our call for a better South Africa. One where the dreams of the past are no longer distant hopes but lived realities. One where every young person can say, ***“I belong. I am seen. I matter.”***

Let Youth Day not only be a moment of remembrance but a movement of renewal. ■

1976 Generation – Trailblazers of the Revolution

■ By **TOKOLOGO TK MPHAHLELE**



NCE again we are faced with youth month, which offers us an opportune moment to critically grapple with a multiplicity of challenges facing youth and society at large. We ought to do so with a clear understanding that youth are in the main three fold: those that are in education, in workplaces and the unemployed youth.

We continue to draw inspiration and courage from the unflinching, bold and brave 1976 generation, as we commemorate 49 years since the uprising in Soweto. Their actions and steadfastness has left an indelible mark that can't be erased in the history of our country.

This unique generation went toe to toe against the cruel, repressive and murderous apartheid



regime, thus locating the youth as trailblazers for the struggle of freedom in our beloved country. We salute the 1976 generation who have laid down their lives in the struggle for liberation. Despite torture, detention and violence they stood firm and persisted in the common struggle to defeat

and destroy the racist regime.

Having inherited a legacy of colonialism of a special type that has entrenched itself for more than 300 years, the historic ushering of the 1994 democratic breakthrough was hailed both domestically and globally. It laid a foundation for a democratic dispensation with a deliberate political will to redress, bringing with it various policy interventions in an attempt to defeat abject poverty, inequalities and substantially reduce the level of unemployment. Many inroads have been made, notwithstanding the cost of living that continues to skyrocket with young people suffering the most. Many still linger outside the mainstream economy with no hope at all.

In honour of the 1976 generation, we ought to stand hand-in-hand and engage in the battle against challenges of youth unemployment, gender-based violence, teenage pregnancy, crime, alcohol & substance abuse, illiteracy, poverty, lack of patriotism, apathy, academic & financial exclusions, unequal access to opportunities etc. We need the youth to actively participate in the recently announced National Convention that will set the agenda for a National Dialogue, and ensure that it is not reduced to merely another talk show or box-ticking exercise. A solid youth voice ought to reverberate in this engagements with the preoccupation of agitating for the creation of a social compact that will enable sustainable growth in the economy and job creation.

Inspired by the 1976 generation, we ought to rise to the occasion and play a meaningful role in society. We should, without a shadow of doubt reiterate the need to have leaders who will serve our communities, not self-serving

individuals. The deliberate inculcation of moral values, patriotism and the spirit of accountability will undoubtedly go a long way in strengthening our hard fought democracy. The activation of second layer leadership should agitate the youth of our country to boldly contest space in all facets including the upcoming 2026 Local Government Elections, in our quest to reinvigorate Local Government and thus fast track service delivery. In doing so, we should strive to continuously sharpen our skills base and knowledge given the changing environment.

The flawed and exclusionary South African economy warrants an immediate structural overhaul. The quest for a restructured economy is over-arching; things just can't remain the same. It should be all hands on deck in accelerating the implementation of "Structural Changes" to enable reconstruction and growth. Such must be characterized by a more inclusive economy that should unlock local production and export potential, to further speak to the re-industrialisation and beneficiation of our mineral

resources and ultimately enable inclusive innovation ecosystem and high-technology industry.

As the current generation, we ought not to rest on our laurels but comprehend the reality that without action, without agitation our tasks will be incomplete; we dare not fail. Forty-nine years ago, the events of June 16 confirmed an abiding lesson: that for a nation to grow it must at critical moments accept the leadership of the youth.

Our future is in our hands.

Long live COSAS of President Ephraim Mogale!
Long live SASCO of President Robinson Ramaite!
Long live the ANCYL of President Anton Lembede!
Jikijela Ufasimba Jikijela!
Hasta la victoria siempre! ■

Tokologo TK Mphahlele is a Former UL SRC Deputy President, Former BMF Student Chapter Limpopo Chairperson, Former SASCO Limpopo Chairperson, Former ANCYL Waterberg RTT Member and Deputy Chairperson of the ANC Ward 32 branch. He writes in his personal capacity.



To Be Young, Willing and Black

■ By **BUSANI NGCAWENI**

To be young willing but black
What an unprecious moment to be in...

To be young, unemployed and black
How dis-membering our political economy can be...

To be young, poor and black
Come economic freedom and save us from nihilism...

Come now Lembede,
free us from economic bondage...

Rise up Luthuli, we yearn for spiritual liberation
For we are young, willing but unemployed
Oh what a precarious moment we're in...

Festivals of chairs
Extravaganzas of insults
Colloquia
Summits, indaba
Conference proceedings
Task teams
Words, words, words
We remain poor, dislocated, disenchanted...

In nervous conditions
Of a future uncertain
We are not at ease...

They ride in black limos
Rest in balconies
Our lost black lives will be buried without limos.
Our black lives matter too...

YOUTH MONTH

They sip single malts
Gin and pink tonic
At high tea
On VIP tables...

We lick tear drops
Dreams shattered
Wallowing in single rooms
We call to the heavens: 'Oliver, Oliver Molo Sosha!'

It was not in vain
For we are young able, but black

Some day we will be free from the slavery of poverty
Come Biko, save us from indifference!

It's the new era, they say
New! For who? For what?
Poverty is old, inter-generational
It crosses over every year, every era
Relentlessly chaining us
It's the new dawn!

We remain black and broke...

They ride in German saloons
Shop in Dubai
First class. Premium lounges
Selfie sticks and Gucci bags...

We'll be buried without limos
without headlines
Without tombstones
Just another murder
Docket lost. Case closed..

Oh come Fanon, re-member us as humans
The sub-city isn't humane...

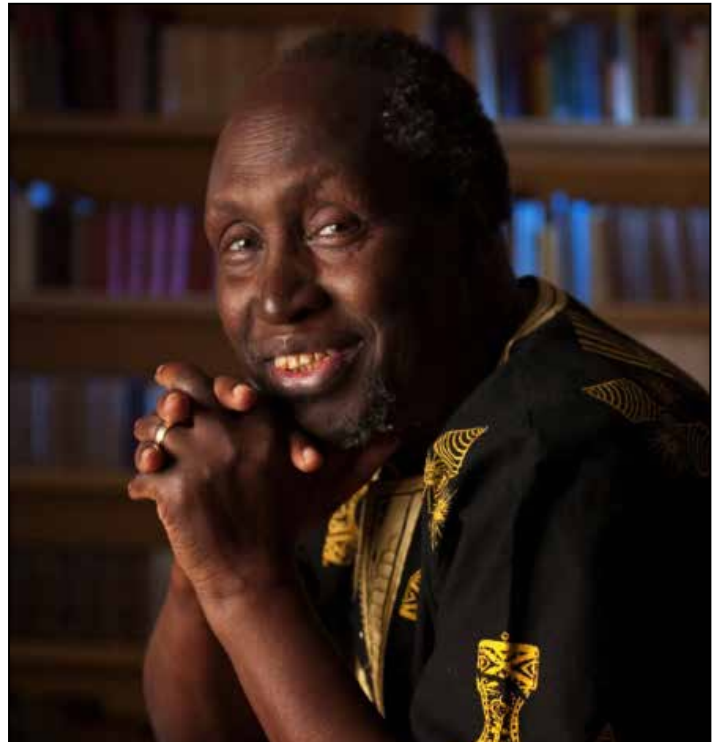
We are black willing but poor.

The political economy isn't kind to us.

Lizobuya!

In memory of the late word-smith Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o

■ By **QONDILE KHEDAMA**



NGŪGĪ wa Thiong'o, who passed away on 28 May 2025, leaves behind one of the most enduring and transformative legacies in the world of letters. Ngũgĩ, a towering intellectual figure, a fierce advocate for linguistic decolonisation, and a political dissident of global resonance, has produced an oeuvre that extends far beyond his fiction.

A many-sided intellectual, he is novelist, essayist, playwright, journalist, editor, academic and social activist. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o stands as a towering figure in African literature, a writer whose prolific career has been inextricably linked with the political and cultural struggles of his native Kenya and the broader African continent. His early life was marked by the Mau Mau uprising, a pivotal anti-colonial struggle that profoundly influenced his nascent political consciousness and literary themes. He redefined the purpose of African literature,

insisting that it must speak to its people in their own languages, reflect their histories, and resist the epistemic violence of colonial modernity.

Born James Ngũgĩ in 1938 in Limuru in the Gikuyu Highlands of Kenya. Limuru pertains to the central province of Kamiriithu. His father was a peasant working as a labourer on the estate of an African landowner. This clearly explains that Ngũgĩ was from a peasantry family. His mother was one of his father's four wives, and he was one of the twenty-eight children his father had had. His education, he spent his primary school education at independent Kenyan schools. He then attended the Alliance High School; an institution based on a western-biased curriculum and Christian teaching. During his high school years, many of his family members were involved in the Mau Mau uprising and the resistance movement. During the struggle, Ngũgĩ's parents were arrested,

and his stepbrother was killed by government forces. However, in 1958, he went to Uganda to pursue his studies at the Makerere College, the only institution available at that time in all East Africa.

He left his country of origin and went to teach in the USA. In his lifetime he has received several honors and awards from around the world. Thanks to his engagement for Africa and her civilization, Ngũgĩ abandoned his European first name, James, to adopt an authentic African first name, Wa Thiong'o. He did this to show Africans that there is nothing shameful about their naming systems. Like Chinua Achebe, another link between the pioneers and the generation of African writers. By reading these pieces of information on Ngũgĩ, you may already imagine the ideological conviction and vision of Ngũgĩ.

In the *Critical Readings of the work of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o* Edited by Gambo Sani-Linguicide,

interpreted as the “killing of a language by its owners,” Ngũgĩ also accuses post-colonial Africans of “*psychic suicide*,” by which he means an inferiority complex which manifests in viewing African languages as inferior and incapable of expressing and sustaining scientific discourses and endeavours. Given this psychic state, African intellectuals are condemned to writing their stories and scientific discoveries in English and French languages, thereby contributing to the vast literatures in these foreign languages at the expense of their own languages.

Ngũgĩ also discusses what he terms a “*linguistic famine*” in the African continent, in which there is a diminishing number of African language speakers over time. While other progressive societies make accumulative advances in the number of speakers of their languages through deliberate and strategic policies, Africans celebrate their mastery and competence of foreign languages. Ngũgĩ’s linguistic revolt therefore is conceived by him as a battle for the soul and survival of Africa. Locating Ngũgĩ’s Linguistic Revolt in the Dialectic of Global Historical Experience Ngũgĩ’s linguistic revolt is not an isolated quest in the history of decolonisation in the world. On the contrary, history teaches us that such revolts have always been the core of all successful decolonisation processes and are crucial in determining the fate of all formerly colonised peoples in their post-colonial situation.

Ngũgĩ understood that language is central to identity and how we see ourselves. The imposition of an alien language confuses and distorts the identities of the colonial subject. The imposition of a foreign language on a people has



been fundamental to all successful colonisation processes, just as much as the revival of an autochthonous language to replace a foreign one has also been a permanent feature of all successful decolonisation processes in the world history. Given this background, it appears safe to say that Ngũgĩ is justly urging Africans to obey the logic of universal history, in which suppressed language forms are retrieved as a necessary stage in the riddle of the politics of language use in global history. World history is replete with incidences of colonisation and decolonisation. Philosophers of history have been baffled by these recurring cycles of human experience and have formulated theories of interpretation to explain the phenomenon. Colonisation begins with imperialist tendencies which, when successful, lead to the emergence of empires. All the world’s great empires that have existed (and collapsed) owe their establishment to this practice. Realist thinkers such as Thucydides, Nicollo Machiavelli and Hans Morgenthau corroborate the point when they argue that the early

Dr. Thehoua Aka Jean teacher-researcher assistant retorts that among other roles that literature could play, it actively participates to the daily actions of men in dealing with crises that humani-

ty is often faced with, and it also sharpens and allows the rebirth of peoples. ***The River Between*** is one of the books of Ngũgĩ where the text focuses on the crisis and some means of liberation for the Kenyan people. Through eminently literary formulas, Ngũgĩ succeeds in finding tools needed to heal the Kenyan society and thus, the African people.

Ngũgĩ not only focused his attention on fiction alone but was also actively involved in play writing. His first play, ***The Black Hermit*** was published in 1962, followed by his second play, ***This Time Tomorrow***, published in 1970. This diverse approach reinforces the importance of oral history and the preservation of cultural knowledge. Not only ***Weep Not, Child*** but many other novels of Thiong’o have the element of storytelling. Thiong’o’s exploration of storytelling and oral traditions in his works illuminates the central role they play within the community. By portraying these practices, he highlights their significance in preserving cultural wisdom, transmitting ancestral knowledge, and asserting cultural identity. Through the power of storytelling, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o empowers his characters to challenge dominant narratives and celebrate the resilience of African cultures. Africans used storytelling as the most form of preserving their history, traditional culture and ritual ceremonies (Amasiko nezithethe), the late wordsmith emphasised the cultural importance of storytelling as a way to motivate, educate, and preserve communal values. His rebellious pen will forever be cherished. ■

Qondile Khedama is a Communication Strategist, writer, and social commentator.



Young people in International Relations

■ By **PHAKAMILE NWAMUSI**

THE South African Government has laid the foundation for many inclusive opportunities that has shaped the way it is moving in the geopolitical space. BRICS and the G20 are two (2) of the biggest among the many organisations including the AU and SADC which South Africa plays a role in. We saw what was regarded as the successful hosting of the BRICS political party dialogue where SA, specifically the ANC hosted more than 20 political parties and the successful admittance of more than 6 countries into BRICS, which we now know as BRICS+. Thus South Africa has a strong

foundation and is strongly rooted in international relations.

As part of the inclusiveness, South Africa, since being a democratic country in 1994, has been inclusive of young people, all ages, all genders, and all races. Young people have a vital role to play global politics. Youth diplomacy is the most imperative and active involvement of youth in international relations. It involves the training and grooming of young people into international relations, additionally promoting the involvement of young people in global issues to foster cultural diplomacy using arts, sports,

music to build solidarity between countries and cultures, dialogue, and ultimately peace and cooperation among nations.

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) is the biggest body that is able to train young people in what is called the '*cadet programme*'. This programme has over the years upskilled many South African ambassadors and diplomats globally but has not been active for a number of years until recently. There has been recently thousands of applicants clearly demonstrating the yearning and commitment of young people

INTERNATIONAL

who participate in international relations. Young people have been seen to lose their place and voice in international relations; they are not involved in decision-making processes. Opportunities of involvement have deteriorated significantly creating a void, which needs the immediate attention of not just DIRCO but the country at large. There is a need for the introduction of more platforms that will facilitate the participation of aspiring young diplomats in the country.

It is known that young people are the future of the world but contradictory in current international relations, young people's presence is not felt in geopolitics. The youth is directly impacted by the current developing international issues that the country has been in the spotlight for, including the tax tariffs from the United States.

It is therefore up to the youth to fight for themselves, bring new

innovative and modern ideas addressing social issues affecting young people including unemployment, poverty, drugs, access to education, violence, age stereotypes, and their place in a changing world. Addressing these injustices, include training youth, engaging in dialogue, introducing innovative technologies and digital diplomacy by using digital platforms and social networks for international communication and problem-solving. The social hierarchy in which the youth is placed must take priority. The Youth must change the world order and be involved in decision-making processes, social justices and economic inclusion.

The ongoing Y20 summit enables dialogue between young people from G20 Member counties. It should be amplified and categorized in the same significance of other major organisations such as the UN, AU, BRICS etc.

The upcoming G20 summit must give young people a platform to engage as future leaders of their nations and the world.

The youth of the G20 member countries must be given an opportunity to reflect on the priority agenda of youth to influence debates, and to contribute to the foreign policy and national interest.

Amid global challenges, it is time for a new era of diplomacy and new ideas which must become an indispensable tool for building international relations of a new type. It is important to create institutional mechanisms that will ensure the sustainability of youth diplomatic initiatives and their transformation into long-term projects. ■

Phakamile Nwamusi is an intern in the international relations department in Chief Albert Luthuli House.



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

21–27 June 2025

Source: SA History Online, O'Malley Archives, Africa Today/Yesterday, The Africa Factbook and Amazwi SA Museum of Literature

21 June 1936

Artist Lionel Davis born in District Six



Artist Lionel Davis was born in District Six, Cape Town, becoming involved in the anti-apartheid struggle after attending night school classes, joining the Non-European Unity Movement and the African Peoples Democratic Union of South Africa (APDUSA). He was arrested for his activism and served a prison sentence on Robben Island from 1964 to 1971, where he completed his Matric. Upon his release, he was served with a banning order that kept him under house arrest until 1976. He joined the Cape Arts Project (CAP) for art classes in 1978, continuing his art education at Rorke's Drift in KZN where he got a diploma, followed by a BA degree in Fine Arts at UCT. He returned to CAP where he worked with community, student, labour and youth organisations, including the UDF and COSATU, to produce media (t-shirts, posters, etc), with his unique artistic flare. His own art

grazed books and posters. He has exhibited in South Africa and other parts of the world, always continuing with arts education, especially for children. He later joined the Robben Island museum, and whilst retired, continues with his art.

21 June 1939

Essop Pahad born



Dr. Essop Goolam Pahad, former Minister in the Presidency of the Republic of South Africa was born in Schweizer-Reneke, Western Transvaal (now North-West Province). He is an alumnus of both the University of Witwatersrand and Sussex University. He joined the Transvaal Indian Congress Youth League in 1958, and was arrested in 1962 for organising an illegal strike following the banning of the ANC, was banned for five years in 1964 and went into exile, where he joined the SACP. He represented the

SACP on the editorial council of the *World Marxist Review*. After 1994, he was elected to the ANC NEC, and became Minister in the Presidency during the Mbeki Presidency. He carried out a wide range of political duties as designated by the President and had specific responsibility for the Office on the Rights of the Child (ORC), Office on the Status of Disabled People (OSPD), Office on the Status of Women (OSW), the National Youth Commission and the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS). Pahad was on the Board of the SA 2010 World Cup Local Organising Committee, chaired the board of the South Africa/Mali Timbuktu Manuscripts Trust as well as chair of the board of trustees of the South African Democracy Education Trust (SADET). In 2008 he founded *The Thinker* and served as its editor, until it was taken over by Wits University in 2019.

21 June 1974

Johanna Cornelius, trade unionist, dies.

Johanna Cornelius was born in Lichtenberg in 1912 in an Afrikaans family. She came to Johannesburg to work in a clothing factory as a machinist in the 1920's. She joined the Garment Workers Union (GAWU), and was arrested during a strike in 1932. She spent a month in the Soviet Union in 1933 as a union

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

delegate, became a full time organizer for GAWU in 1935 and elected President in the same year. She was accused of being a communist for organizing black workers, but this did not deter her from organizing all workers in GAWU. In 1952, she took over as Secretary General of GAWU.

21 June 1989 Albertina Sisulu addresses London Anti-Apartheid rally



For her very first trip abroad, Albertina Sisulu was accompanied by her Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) comrades, Sister Bernard Ncube and Jessie Duarte. The group was later joined by United Democratic Front (UDF) leaders; Curnick Ndlovu, Azhar Cachalia and Titus Mafolo, and the SA delegation visited four countries; Sweden, France, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA). The delegation held their meetings in the United Kingdom at the Anti-apartheid Movement headquarters; there they met with Neil Kinnock and other members of the Labour Party as well as religious organisations. Ma Sisulu addressed a rally held in London on 21 June 1989 to protest against Margaret Thatcher and F.W. de Klerk's imminent meeting. Thatcher was the then British Prime Minister. Sisulu proclaimed

"De Klerk needs more money, he needs more loans from your banks, to keep apartheid going - to pay the army and buy arms. He is asking Western countries to help the Nats stay in power."

21 June 1992. ANC suspends Negotiations after Boipatong Massacre

The ANC suspended negotiations after the Boipatong massacre, amongst the most brutal in third force violence that wrecked the country since late 1980s and escalating as the negotiations unfolded.

22 June 1998 Shark attack

A White killer shark at Gonubie Point, Eastern Cape coast mutilated the 20-year old Anton de Vos. De Vos who died the following afternoon from his injuries. According to sharkattackdata.com there were over 157 shark attacks in the Eastern Cape between 1900 and 2015; 23 of them fatal, mainly people swimming or diving. Total shark attacks in South Africa for the same period were about 566. South Africa has about 98 different species of sharks in its coastal waters.

22 June 2005 First woman Deputy President, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka appointed

South Africa's first female Deputy President, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka is appointed to Cabinet by President Thabo Mbeki. Mlambo-Ngcuka's education, activism and experience made her uniquely suitable for this position. During her tenure as Deputy President, she played a key role in government programmes to attract scarce skills, engaging with business to encourage investments,



advocating for women in business and industry, and the promotion of education (2005-2008). Prior to her appointment, she served as a Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry (1996-1999); Minister of Minerals and Energy (1999-2005); and a Member of Parliament and Chairperson of the Public Service and Administration Portfolio Committee in 1994. In 2013, she was appointed as Executive Director of UN Women and UN Under-Secretary General. She holds a Master's of Philosophy degree in Educational Planning and Policy (2003); a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Science and Education from National University of Lesotho (NUL) 1980 and studied Gender Policy and Planning Development at Planning Unit of the University College of London in 1988.

23 June 1994 South Africa rejoins the United Nations



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

South Africa is readmitted to the United Nations by resolution of the General Assembly, recalling resolution 48/285 and inviting it to resume its seat at the UNGA. The General Assembly also waved UN fees owed by South Africa from 30 September 1974 to 23 June 1994.

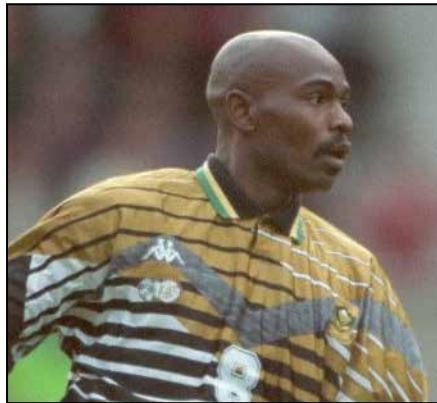
23 June 1956 Nasser elected as President of Egypt



General Gamal Abdel Nasser was elected as President of Egypt, a position he held until his death in 1970. Nasser is known for building the Aswan Dam on the Nile, providing electricity to large part of Egypt, annexing the Suez Canal as a national asset, the industrialization of Egypt, and the creation of a middle class and women's rights. He was one of the founders of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU, now the African Union) and active in affairs of the Arab region, advocating for its self-determination. He fought two wars against Israel and mediated in the Jordan civil war.

23 June 1969 Football legend Innocent Buthelezi born

Innocent Linda Buthelezi, SA soccer icon and midfielder is born in Johannesburg. During his illustrious career he played professional football for such teams



as Jomo Cosmos, Kaizer Chiefs, Karabükspor, Orlando Pirates, Mamelodi Sundowns and SuperSport United. He represented South Africa in 27 Bafana Bafana games, and was part of the team that won the African Cup of Nations in 1996.

23 June 2000 Huge Oil spill as MV Treasurer sunk near Dassen and Robben Islands

The MV Treasurer, a ship that transported iron ore between Brazil and China sank between Dassen Island and Robben Island off the coast of South Africa, spilling over 1300 tons of bunkers oil. The two islands are home to the second and third largest colonies of penguins in the world. Over 20,000 contaminated penguins were rescued and cleaned in a united effort by an effort coordinated by the Interantional Bird Rescue response team, working with other not for profits, government, environmentalists and citizens, and over 19,000 penguins had to be relocated, to prevent them from getting contaminated. Six years earlier, another 10,000 penguins were oiled when another iron ore carrier sunk near Cape Town.

24 June 1908 Educationist Godfrey Nakene born

Educationist and school principal,

Godfrey Nakene, in whose honour Orlando High School was re-named Nakene High School, was born in Ga-Ramokgopa, Pietersburg district. Nakene became one of the first Black student to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts degree from University of Witwatersrand. He was also the first principal of Orlando High School. He died in January 1983 on his farm Kameelrivier in Groblersdal district. The University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus) bestowed a Doctorate in education posthumously for his contribution to education in South Africa.

24 June 1981 Sun City opens for Business

International tourist attraction, Sun City in the Northwest province was opened by business mogul Sol Kerzner, with a performance by Frank Sinatra. It has been expanded a number of times, including the addition of the Palace of the Lost City, an artificial beach and other attractions. The movie Blended, starring Drew Barrymore and Adam Sandler was shot in Sun City in 2013.

24 June 1984 Kenyan long distance champion Priscah Jeptoo born



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Long distance runner Priscah Jeptoo is ranked third in the world in long distance running. She only began competing in top competitions in 2008 but has achieved so much in such a short space of time. Jeptoo was runner up in the World Championships in Athletics in 2011 and third in the 2012 London Olympics. So far, Jeptoo has claimed victory in marathons in Paris, Turin and London. In 2011 she took part in the Discovery Kenya Cross Country Marathon and won. In 2013 she once again claimed victory in the 2013 London Marathon.

24 June 1995 South Africa wins the Rugby World Cup



The Springboks beat New Zealand in the World Cup Rugby final at Ellis Park Stadium, to win the Rugby World Cup. This was the first to be hosted by South Africa since the end of apartheid, and President Mandela played an important role in the tournament, wearing the Springbok jersey and handed over the trophy to Captain Francois Du Plessis. The movie **Invictus** is based on events of the World Cup.

25 June 1959 Potato boycott launched

The South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) launched

a potato boycott to protest the inhuman conditions suffered by workers on potato farms in Bethal in the Eastern Transvaal (now Mpumalanga). The inhuman and slave treatment by farmers was exposed by newspapers like *The New Age* and *Drum* magazine. The potato boycott lasted for four months and was highly successful, with farmers having to negotiate with leaders of the boycott for it to be called off.

25 June 1975 Mozambique gains Independence



Mozambique gained its independence from Portugal, which colonised it since the 16th century. The liberation movement FRELIMO was formed in 1962, under the leadership of Eduardo Mondlane, and after his death in 1969, was led by Samora Machel who became the first President of an independent Mozambique.

25 June 1980 Helen Joseph banned



Helen Joseph on this day was served with a further two-year banning order. A social worker, Joseph was also a member of the Garment Workers Union and a founder of the South African Congress of Democrats, and as delegate read out one of the clauses of the Freedom Charter at the Congress of the People in 1955. A founder member of FEDSAW, Mam Helen, along with Lillian Ngoyi, Raheema Mohamed and Sophie de Bruyn, was one of the leaders of the 1956 Women's March. She is author of three books, *If This Be Treason* about the 1956 Treason Trial, *Tomorrow's Sun*, in which she documented her 8,000 mile search for people banished to remote regions; and her autobiography, *Side by Side*.

26 June 1945 United Nations Charter adopted

The United Nations Charter was adopted in San Francisco by the United Nations Conference on International Organisations. The preamble to the charter was based on a draft which South African premier General Jan Smuts had prepared. Governments and a number of non-government organisations, including the Lions Clubs International, received invitations to assist in the drafting of a charter. It was signed by the fifty countries represented at the conference. Poland, which was not present at the conference but which had a reserved place, added its name later to bring the total of "original" signatories to 51. The Charter came into effect on the 24th of October 1945 after it was ratified by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, namely the Republic of China, France, USSR, United Kingdom, and the United States. The Statute of the International Court of Justice became an integral part of the Charter.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

26 June 1952

Defiance Campaign starts

The campaign by the Congress Alliance led by the ANC to defy apartheid laws begins. In major South African cities, people performed acts of defiance and civil disobedience.

26 June 1955

Congress of the People held in Kliptown

One of the largest policy gatherings took place, with delegates from all over the country, to draft the **Freedom Charter**, after a campaign to collect demands from South Africans from all walks of life. The police tried to stop the event, held in Kliptown, Johannesburg from taking place, stopping people from leaving by train and buses, surrounding the venue, but this did not stop the organisers. The National Action Committee that organised the Congress of the People consisted of the ANC, the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), the Coloured People's Organisation, the South African Indian Congress and the Congress of Democrats. At the event, *"the various clauses of the Charter were introduced. There was an opportunity for impromptu speeches from delegates present, and the clauses were then read out and acclaimed by a show of hands. The three thousand delegates who gathered at Kliptown*

on 25 and 26 June 1955 were workers, peasants, intellectuals, women, youth and students of all races and colours." During the Congress of the People, the highest ANC award **Isithwalandwe/Seaparankwe** was bestowed on Chief Albert Luthuli, Dr Yusuf Dadoo and Bishop Trevor Huddleston.

26 June 1960

Madagascar independence



The island state of Madagascar, with five million people at the time gains independence from France. Its capital is Antananarivo.

26 June 1961

Ghana imposed total ban on trade with apartheid South Africa

Ghana, under the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah who gained its independence in 1957, imposed a total ban on imports from apartheid South Africa and South West Africa (now Namibia).

26 June 1967

Doctor Khumalo born

Star midfielder of Kaiser Chiefs and Bafana Bafana was born on this day in Soweto. During the 1990s, he led Chiefs to three South African league championship titles and five knock out trophies. Doctor Khumalo scored 90 goals in the 397 league and cup games for Chiefs. He was named SA Footballer of the Year in 1992.

26 June 1977

Last French colony in Africa to gain independence



Djibouti, part of the Horn of Africa, is the last French colony to gain independence, after being colonized by France as part of French Somaliland. After the war with Eritrea, which made Ethiopia landlocked, Djibouti became the main export port for Ethiopia, with a rail line and roads from Addis Ababa to Djibouti City. Given its strategic location in the Red Sea and near the Suez Canal, connecting Africa, the Middle East and Asia, Djibouti is also home to military bases by the US, China, Saudi Arabia, the UK, France, Italy and Japan.

27 June 1925

Jazz legend Kippie Moeketsi born

The father of South African Jazz, saxophonist Kippie Moeketsi is born in Johannesburg on this day.



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

27 June 1951

Musician David Kramer born on this day



The South African singer, songwriter, playwright and director was born on this day. He is especially well-known for his musicals with Taliep Petersen about the Coloured communities and the ways in which he fought Apartheid through the arts. Kramer was born in Worcester, where he completed school and went on to do a degree in textile design in Leeds. He started his music career in the late 1970s, mainly performing his satirical songs on university campuses and small towns. His album *Bakgat* (1980) was banned by the SABC. Kramer and Petersen collaborated for the first time with musical *District Six* in 1987.

27 June 1967

World's first ATM

The automatic teller machine (ATM), dispensing cash. The world's first ATM arrived at a bank in London on 27 June 1967. It was invented by John Shepherd-Barron. Sweden, Japan and the USA have all been working on similar technologies. In the USA, Luther George Simjian is credited with the invention of the bankograph machine.

27 June 1961

Nigerian feminist Amina Mohammed born



Nigerian diplomat, minister and feminist was born in Liverpool, England, playing a key role in the crafting of the UN development goals and agenda. From 2017 to present she served as UN Deputy Secretary General.

27 June 1971

Ghana imposed total ban on exports to Apartheid South Africa

The government of Ghana, led by Kwame Nkrumah imposed a total ban on the export of all Ghanaian produce to South Africa and South West Africa, as a protest against apartheid. Ghana was one of the first African states to call on South African government to abolish its apartheid policy.

27 June 1986

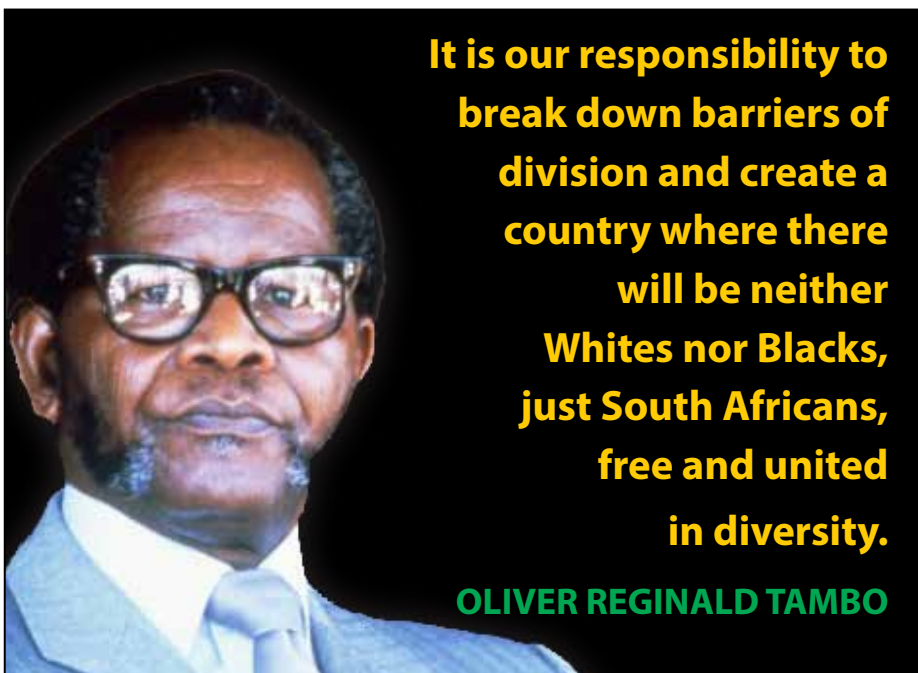
Zwelakhe Sisulu abducted

Zwelakhe Sisulu, activist, journalist, founder and editor of the *New Nation* newspaper was abducted from his home in Soweto by four white men wearing balaclavas. He was also a founder of the Media Workers Association of South Africa (MWASA). In 1981 he was arrested under the Terrorism Act, detained without trial, tortured and released after 251 days. Five years later, on 27 June 1986, when he was the editor of the *New Nation*, Sisulu was abducted at his home in Soweto. Then Minister of Law and Order, Adriaan Vlok later confirmed that the men who abducted him were police and that they had detained him. He was released 721 days later on 2 December 1988.

27 June 2014

AU Members states signs Malabo Declaration

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the African Union Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), member states sign the Malabo Declaration, recommitting to prioritise agriculture in national development agendas, end hunger and triple intra-African trade in agricultural goods and services by 2025.



**It is our responsibility to
break down barriers of
division and create a
country where there
will be neither
Whites nor Blacks,
just South Africans,
free and united
in diversity.**

OLIVER REGINALD TAMBO

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

21–27 June 2025

Source: www.un.org, www.au.int, *The Africa Fact Book (2020)*, www.daysoftheyear.com

21 June

World Yoga Day

Yoga as a physical, mental and spiritual practice started in India, and is now being practiced worldwide. This practice aims at making an individual's physical, mental and spiritual health better. This year's theme, *"Yoga for One Earth, One Health,"* highlights its role in individual wellness and global sustainability.

23 June

African Public Service Day



African Public Service Day is celebrated as part of a continental strategy to boost public administration programmes, public sector performance and governance as well as recognise the value and virtue of service to the community. It aims to discover innovations, reward excellence in the public sector, motivate public servants to further promote innovation, enhance professionalism in the public service, raise the image of public service, enhance trust in government, collect, document and share best practices for possible replication within a country as well as across the African Continent. This year the continent will celebrate 10 years of African Pub-

lic Service Day under the theme: *"Enhancing the agility and resilience of public institutions to achieve equitable governance and rapidly address historical service delivery gaps."*

23 June

International Widows Day

For many women around the world, the devastating loss of a partner is magnified by a long-term fight for their basic rights and dignity. Despite the fact that there are more than 258 million widows around the world, widows have historically been left unseen, unsupported, and unmeasured in our societies. Today, as armed conflicts, displacement and migration leave tens of thousands of women newly widowed and many others whose partners are missing or disappeared, the unique experiences and needs of widows must be brought to the forefront, with their voices leading the way. Experience from the past, shows that widows are often denied inheritance rights, have their property grabbed after the death of a partner, and can face extreme stigma and discrimination, as perceived 'carriers' of disease. Worldwide, women are much less likely to have access to old age pensions than men, so the



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

death of a spouse can lead to destitution for older women. In the context of lockdowns and economic closures, widows may not have access to bank accounts and pensions to pay for healthcare if they too become ill or to support themselves and their children. With lone-mother families and single older women already particularly vulnerable to poverty, this is an area that needs urgent attention.

23 June UN Public Service Day



The digital revolution of the last decade has changed the way we live, work, and govern. It has made more information available, civil society voices more audible and it has impacted on how we solve problems, design policy and deliver services. The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic deepened these trends, with remote work in government, digital service delivery, virtual service teams, and even new portfolios, as governments also have to address the deep digital divides in their societies.

25 June. Day of the Seafarer



The Day of the Seafarer is a global observance that seeks to recognize and celebrate the invaluable contributions of seafarers, who form the backbone of the maritime industry. This occasion fos-

ters appreciation for the crucial role seafarers play in international shipping and trade, along with the inherent challenges and risks they face in their profession. By raising awareness about the seafaring community and promoting better working conditions, this event aims to ensure a thriving global maritime sector that nurtures the well-being of its skilled workforce. With its extensive coastline and deep-rooted maritime traditions, South Africa has a unique bond with the world of seafaring, making the Day of the Seafarer particularly relevant for the nation. Established in 2010 by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), this special day serves as a reminder to all South Africans of the importance of their maritime heritage and the profound impact the seafaring community has on the country's economic growth and prosperity. South Africa's intrinsic connection to the seas, along with its rich maritime history, results in a natural affinity towards honoring and supporting the seafarers who contribute immensely to national and international maritime affairs. In South Africa, the Day of the Seafarer is marked by various activities that showcase the nation's respect and appreciation for its maritime professionals. These may include events such as educational workshops, knowledge-sharing sessions, and maritime exhibits, offering a window into the diverse and exciting world of seafaring. Workplaces and institutions may also engage in campaigns acknowledging the efforts of their seafaring employees, amplifying the significance of this memorable occasion. Observed each year on the 25th of June, the Day of the Seafarer echoes South Africa's steadfast connection to the ocean and the many individuals who work to keep its seafaring spirit alive.

25 June Goats Cheese Day

When we think of dairy products, we mainly think of cows, but goat milk and its by-products have been around, especially in areas where goats were more plentiful than cattle, like the Middle East and Mediterranean. They were amongst the first animals domesticated for their milk and meat. Goat cheese (or chevré) have been made more than 8000 years ago and the first documented evidence of humans making goat cheese was in Poland more than 7500 years ago. Goat cheese is a good source of selenium, usually only found in seafoods; it has more minerals and fewer calories than cow milk. Goats are also more environmentally friendly, since they are smaller, and require less space and

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food, and they happily eat foraged desert scrub, weeds, trees, shrubs, and aromatic herbs.

26 June

International Day Against Drug Abuse and trafficking in Illicit Drugs



The United Nations General Assembly in 1987 decided to observe 26 June as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking (or World Drugs Day) as an expression of its determination to strengthen action and cooperation to achieve the goal of an international society free of drug abuse. Supported each year by individuals, communities, and various organizations all over the world, this global observance aims to raise awareness of the major problem that illicit drugs represent to society. The global drug problem presents a multifaceted challenge that touches the lives of millions worldwide. From individuals struggling with substance use disorders to communities grappling with the consequences of drug trafficking and organized crime, the impact of drugs is far-reaching and complex. This year's campaign "Break the cycle. #StopOrganizedCrime" highlights the need for coordinated long-term action to break the cycle of organized crime and drug trafficking - by addressing root causes, investing in prevention and building stronger health, education and social systems. #WorldDrugDay #InvestInPrevention #StopOrganizedCrime

26 June

International Day in support of Victims of Torture

Torture seeks to annihilate the victim's personality and denies the inherent dignity of the human being. Despite the absolute prohibition of torture under international law, torture persists in all regions of the world. 26 June is an opportunity to call on all stakeholders, including UN Member States, civil society and individuals everywhere to unite in support of the hundreds of thousands of people around the world who have been victims of torture and those who are still tortured today.



27 June

World Small Business Day

Formal and informal micro, small and medium enterprises make up over 90% of all firms and account, on average, for 70% of total employment and 50% of GDP. As such, they are key actors in achieving a green recovery. The Brookings Institute identifies five key opportunities for business in Africa: (a) a fast-growing and urbanizing population; (b) Africa is industrializing, and manufacturing (from agro-processing, automobiles to mineral beneficiation and is expected to double in the coming decade; (c) the continent is pushing to close its infrastructure backlog, from transport to energy to ICT, as well as social infrastructure; (d) there are innovations, home-grown and imported, to unleash its agricultural and resource wealth; and (e) the potential provided by increased digital and mobile access.

